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WHO KNOWS?

You loathe that woman across the way,
With the red rum-brand on her hollow cheek,
And a thousand prayers might your pure lips say,
Yet never one name of the wanton speak;
You would scream outright if one bony finger
Touched but the hem of your trailing dress,
And smile your thanks at the guard who should bring her
Back to a sense of her lawlessness.
Ah! had it been for you to find
A worm in the heart of life's sweetest rose;
If lips had cursed that were sworn to be kind,
With sin before you and hunger behind,
Would you have done better than she—who knows?

You spurn that man from your very door,
You are wealthy and honored, and all o' that,
While he is wretched, and ragged and poor,
And under the shadow of theft and debt;
You say to your wife, "there's the almshouse and prison,
And one or the other his place should be.
I pay my taxes and no old wizen
Shall stand in my gates to wheedle me."
Softly, 'on hoarder, some swift-coming dawn
May look on thee, likewise, a creature of woes,
Your castles to ashes and dust be gone,
And this vagrant give alms to your children—who knows?

There's many a man to prate wisely of life—
Behold, look at me, see how straightly I walk,
While some fellow-mortal goes down in the strife,
Who a *lift* would help more than a world full of talk;
We gather about us our garments patrician,
And take to our homes by some safe shady way,
And shudder at the look of the hapless condition
Of poor ruined souls in the judgment day;
But, ah, when the angels' book at last
Shall its sealed covers all unclose,
And the paths be traced where the pilgrims passed,
Where the act and the motive alike are bare,
What soul will stand whitest with God—who knows?

MIRIAM EARL.

THE

Bandits of the Prairie.

A TALE OF THE TEXAN FRONTIER.

BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

GEORGE STANHOPE AND WALTER DARRELL FOLDING THE STREAM IN SEARCH OF THE LOST LOUISA.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE TRAIL.

When Walter Darrell was called away from his betrothed by George Stanhope, he walked quickly toward his prospective brother-in-law, who was on the porch, examining his rifle and whistling abstractedly.

"What is it, my boy? Why did you call me?" asked Darrell.

"Why, those cursed Indians are around again," replied Stanhope.

"Indeed! Have you seen them?"

"Yes. You see, I was out on a hunting expedition this afternoon—several miles out on the prairie. I had shot a fine-looking deer, and was just getting off my horse to examine my prize, when I heard the rumble of horses' feet, and looking over the prairie I saw a band of savages—about a dozen—coming at full speed toward me. I abandoned the deer, of course, turned my horse's head toward home, and fled for my life. The Indians pursued me for a short distance, but my horse outran theirs, and they soon gave up the chase. And now comes the strange part of it. When I last saw them, they had halted in the bed of a small stream, apparently for consultation; but when, a moment later, I looked back, they were nowhere to be seen. They could not have got out of sight in any direction by flight, for from the spot where I was I had a full view of the surrounding plain. They must have concealed themselves somewhere along the banks of the stream, but for what purpose I cannot imagine. I sat there on my horse for nearly an hour, watching for some trace of them; but not a living thing was to be seen near the spot, and as night was drawing near I hurried home."

"This is strange," said Darrell. "The Indians certainly mean mischief, or they would not have concealed themselves."

"So I think, but I can't imagine what they intend to do. They will hardly venture to attack the house, and Juan and his herdsmen will be too much for such a force as that, if they attempt to steal the cattle."

"Have you informed your father of the circumstances?"

"Yes. He fears only for his family, and wants us to stand guard all night. I don't think there is any danger, but it is best to be prepared for the worst. Hark! I thought I heard voices in the garden."

"I think you were mistaken, but I will go and see," said Darrell, turning away.

At that moment a wild, despairing scream rang through the balmy evening air.

"*Oh, Walter, Walter! help help, help!*"

"Great God!" cried Darrell, springing toward the garden gate, "that is Louisa's voice. I left her safe in the arbor a moment ago—what can have happened?"

He rushed frantically into the garden, followed by George Stanhope and the other members of the family, all having been alarmed by that strange, terrible cry for help. He reached the arbor, but it was deserted—the beautiful maiden was not there.

"She is gone!" he groaned, staggering like a drunken man.

"Gone, do you say?" exclaimed Mr. Stanhope in an agonized voice.

"Ay, she is gone—lost—stolen—by whom, God alone knows."

"The Indians—the Indians!" cried George. "It is their work, and if we would rescue the poor girl, we must start in pursuit at once. Listen!"

Faintly, from the darkness of the distant prairie, came floating a mournful cry—

"Oh, Walter, Walter, Walter!"

"My God!" said Darrell, almost insane with grief, "my darling calls to me, and I am powerless to help her! Stanhope, what shall we do? Shall we stand here like cowards, while the poor girl is being borne away to death—or worse than death?"

"No!" replied young Stanhope, fiercely, "we will go at once to the rescue. Pompey," to a black servant-boy, who stood with eyes and mouth widely distended, "run to the stables and saddle Ebony and Rover, and bring them out at once."

"Yes, sah!" said the boy, darting away.

"Darrell, we will go to the house and arm ourselves to the teeth," continued George, whose bold, adventurous disposition was fully awakened. "Father, you must stay to guard the house. We will deliver my sister from the hands of these wretches, or perish in the attempt.

A moment later the two young men, armed with rifles and revolvers, mounted to the backs of their restless steeds.

"Good-bye, father, mother and sister," said George, hastily. "God willing, we will soon return with the missing one—beautiful, lost Louisa."

"Good bye, my son," said the afflicted father, in trembling tones, "and Heaven aid your enterprise."

Without further words, the young men put spurs to their horses and galloped furiously across the prairie.

"I fear that we shall not succeed in our expedition," said Darrell, gloomily. "We know not where to go to find your sister's captors, and we shall not have the power to set her free, even if we succeed in finding her."

"Don't be down-hearted, Walter," returned Stanhope. "Let us hope for the best, at least. I am confident that Louisa was stolen by a part of the same gang that pursued me, and they will of course bear her to the place where they left their comrades—in all probability to the place where they disappeared after chasing me this evening. We will ride straight for this stream, as fast as our horses can carry us, and it is possible that we may overtake the scoundrels who have abducted my sister before they get back to their companions. If we do, we will settle with them as they deserve; if we do not, we will trust to luck to aid us, but I will never give up till my sister is delivered from her savage captors."

"I am with you, George, heart and hand," said Walter, solemnly. "Your sister is dearer to me than all the world, and I would lose my life rather than see a hair of her dear head harmed."

"Then we are brothers indeed, and we will hunt to the death the dear girl's captors."

"Amen!" replied Darrell, in a voice that betokened his earnestness.

They rode on for a considerable distance without speaking further. The night was clear, and the stars gave sufficient light to enable the travellers to discern surrounding objects with tolerable distinctness.

"We are nearing the stream where the red-skins concealed themselves," said Stanhope at length. "The rascals who stole poor Louisa must have had swift horses, or we should have overtaken them before this. We must now be cautious, and try to discover their encampment, for I am certain that they are concealed somewhere among the trees on the opposite side of the stream."

"I think rather that the Indians have fled without halting with their beautiful captive, and that if we would find her we must seek her in the Camanche villages."

"I think not—I hope not," said George, excitedly. "In that case, we need not hope to find my sister for days. But I am confident that the Indians are encamped for the night near here, and if they are we shall discover them."

"How shall we proceed? Remember I am a novice in Indian warfare, or border strategy. I can ride and shoot as well as any one, but you must direct our movements."

"Well, I am familiar with the prairies, and I know something about the habits of these red scoundrels of the desert. If they are encamped over yonder, they have stationed two of their number as sentinels, while the rest are stretched upon the ground in slumber. If we can approach without being heard, we may be able to stab the sentinels, and free the captive. It's a dangerous game, I know—if we are discovered, we shall have a short time in which to say our prayers; but we must run the risk."

"Let us to work, then, at once—every moment of time is precious."

"First we must cross this shallow stream, and we must go slowly, lest our horses make too much noise. Ho, Rover—be careful, old boy."

The fording of the stream was accomplished in silence, and the young men halted upon the bank.

"We must dismount, and tie our horses," said Stanhope, "while we reconnoitre on foot. If the Indians are here, they are concealed in that strip of timber which skirts the stream for a short distance. Now I propose that you ascend the bank, and scout along that edge of the timber, while I will follow the bank of the stream, and we will meet at the other end of the piece of woods, which does not extend more than half a mile. If there is a camp anywhere among the trees, one or the other of us will certainly discover it, as the timber-belt is very narrow."

"Very well—I think it a good plan," replied Darrell, springing from his horse and fastening him securely to the branch of a tree, while his companion did the same.

"Be careful, Walter—make no noise; do not fire a shot, under any circumstances."

"Trust me, I will be cautious," said Walter, springing lightly up the grassy bank, and stealing noiselessly along just at the edge of the strip of timber. Crouching like a tiger in search of prey, the young man crept forward, straining his eyes to pierce the gloomy darkness of the wood, and listening intently to hear some sound that would warn him of the presence of his savage foes. But nothing was to be seen or heard. No camp-fire cast its ghastly light over the surrounding foliage; no sound broke the solemn stillness of the autumn night. At length he reached the limits of the wood, and was confronted by a crouching, shadowy figure, similar to his own.

"Stanhope?" he asked, staring hard at the dark form.

"Well?" replied the voice of his friend

"I have discovered nothing," said Darrell.

"Nor I," replied Stanhope. "The Indians are not here—and Heaven alone knows when and where we shall find poor Louisa."

"We must not give up the search," said Darrell.

"Of course not—but it will be useless for us to try to follow the trail to-night. We must go back to our horses, wait till morning, and take the trail at the first approach of daylight."

"And while we are tarrying here, the savages will be carrying poor Louisa miles and miles further away."

"Well, what can we do?" replied George, impatiently. "We cannot find the trail to-night—and in all probability we should go in an entirely wrong direction; but if we wait till morning, we can easily follow their tracks, and very likely overtake them by to-morrow night."

"You are right, George; we will do as you think best. But I am maddened when I think how my darling must be suffering, and I unable to aid her."

"Let us return at once to the place where we left our horses. I know we cannot sleep, but we will wait as patiently as possible for the appearance of morning.

The two friends started back toward their horses, walking swiftly, and exchanging a word at intervals, as they no longer saw any reason for preserving silence. When about half the distance was traversed, Darrell paused suddenly, and clutched his companion's arm.

"Hark!" he said, in a thrilling whisper.

"I hear nothing," replied Stanhope, after listening intently for a moment.

"I heard the snapping of twigs there amid the trees, as if some one was walking through the timber."

"You were mistaken, Walter," said Stanhope. "If you heard any noise, it was caused by some wild animal. Let us go on."

The young men returned to their horses, and grasping their revolvers in their hands, threw themselves on the ground, not to sleep, but to await the appearance of daylight. The time passed slowly to the anxious brother and lover—every hour seemed an age to them; but at last the gray light of dawn was seen in the east, and the darkness faded away.

As soon as they could see distinctly, the friends commenced searching for the trail of the retreating Indians. They had no trouble in finding it, as the horses had left the prints of their hoofs plainly in the soft ground. The tracks were numerous, some leading one way and some another; evidently the Indians had crossed and recrossed the stream at the same point. As the trail could easily be followed, the young scouts mounted their steeds, and galloped rapidly westward across the vast plain.

"The rascals have not tried to conceal their trail, at any rate," said Stanhope. "There are not more than eight or ten of them, I think—but if there should be a hundred, we will not be afraid."

"I would fight the whole Camanche tribe for the sake of rescuing your sister," replied Darrell.

Speaking but seldom, they rode onward swiftly and steadily. The trail led for miles in a straight line across a seemingly boundless prairie, where not even a tree relieved the monotony of the scene. At last, after several hours of hard riding, the young men came to the edge of a small river, which crept sluggishly along between its low, grassy banks. The stream was wide and shallow at the place where the Indians' trail led to the water, and our friends had no difficulty in fording it. But on the opposite shore the trail could not be found, and the young men were puzzled to decide what course to pursue.

"The Indians have waded their horses for some distance up or down the stream, in order to throw their pursuers off the track, and if we look along the shore we shall find the trail again," said George.

But he was mistaken. They rode for a long distance up and down the sandy shore, but not a mark of a horse's hoof could be found.

"It is folly to waste time thus," at length exclaimed Stanhope. "They must have crossed the river at some point, for there is no hiding-place near here; and we may as well ride on at once. I'm certain we'll soon strike the trail again on the prairie."

Darrell made no reply. His face was clouded with gloom, for he had almost given up the hope of finding the maiden whom he loved so dearly.

They galloped onward with unabated speed, hoping against hope; and ere long they again came upon a trail, which they supposed to be the same that they had been following.

"They thought to cheat us, but they were not cunning enough," said George, exultantly. "Cheer up, Walter—if we don't overtake the red devils before night, I'm much mistaken."

"But what can two do against a dozen?" asked Walter.

"They can do much, when their cause is as just as ours. I feel myself a match for any six such thieving rascals, and so do you, my boy."

"I will fight to the death—man cannot do more."

"I feel that we shall be successful. Up, Rover—no lagging here—you have miles before you still."

The day wore on. The sun was sinking in the heavens ere the young scouts allowed their panting horses to pause, and slake their thirst from the waters of a little stream.

"Do you see that grove of trees yonder?" asked Stanhope, pointing to a belt of timber about a mile distant, behind which the afternoon sun was sinking.

"Of course; what of it?" returned Darrell.

"And do you see that tiny wreath of smoke curling above the tops of the trees?"

"I do. What does it mean?"

"It means that the Indians are encamped there, cooking their supper, and that to-night we must make the effort to rescue poor Louisa."

"Let us rush forward at once, then, and surprise them," said Walter, eagerly.

"You certainly told the truth when you said that you knew nothing about Indian warfare," replied George, smiling. "Were we to do as you say, we should be a good deal more surprised than our enemies. We must conceal ourselves, and wait till darkness falls, when the Indians will be nearly all asleep. Then, if we are silent and careful, we may succeed in our design."

"It is hard to wait," said Darrell, "but I suppose we must do so. Let us conceal ourselves at once, lest the Indians discover us, and thus defeat our plans."

Dismounting, the young men fastened their horses in a little thicket of bushes, and then lay down to await, with what patience they could, the coming of the friendly darkness.

The sun sank in the west, and the twilight faded into deeper gloom. The sky was hazy, and the night bade fair to be intensely dark. The young men crept from the shelter of the bushes, and walked swiftly but silently toward the grove in which they supposed the Indians to be encamped. They reached the edge of the grove, and crouched like guilty things beneath the trees, staring with eager eyes at the scene before them.

An armful of dry branches blazed beneath the foliage of a huge live-oak, and reclining around the fire, in various degrees of drowsiness, were nearly a score of brawny and hideously painted Indians.

And in the centre of the group, with her head sunk upon her lap, and her dark curls flowing unconfined over her shoulders, was a woman, whose graceful figure indicated that she was young and beautiful.

"It is Louisa," whispered Darrell. "Come on—are you ready?"

"Wait," said his friend, holding him back. "Wait until the Indians are all wrapped in deep slumber, and then we will steal forward and cut the bands that bind the poor girl's limbs. Be still as death—the slightest sound may spoil all."

Ere many minutes, the most wakeful of the red braves rolled over upon the ground, and his heavy breathing told the anxious watchers that he was in the land of dreams.

"Now!" whispered Stanhope, grasping his friend's arm. "You must steal forward and cut the cords, while I stand ready to plunge my hunting-knife to the heart of the first brave that awakes. Be careful!"

Noiselessly as ghosts, the young men stole forward among their deadly enemies. Darrell held in his hand a small, keen-edged knife, with which to sever the cords that bound the maiden's wrists and ankles. He bent over her, and laid his hand gently on her shoulder. "Louisa!" he whispered in her ear.

The captive started slightly, raised her head, and the light of the fire fell full upon her face.

CHAPTER V.

IN THE HANDS OF THE CAMANCHES.

The beautiful face which was raised to Darrell's was not the face of Louisa Stanhope.

"Not Louisa!" he gasped. "Oh, Heaven, where can my darling be?"

"Hush!" hissed George Stanhope, grasping his friend's arm. "Are you mad, Darrell? Do you wish to die, that you act thus in the very midst of our enemies?"

"Yes;" replied Darrell aloud. "Louisa is not here, and I care not how soon I die."

"Hush, I say! Come away—quick, the Indians are awaking. Come—but it is too late—your folly has betrayed us—we must die the most horrible of deaths!"

Aroused by Darrell's voice, several of the red braves sprang to their feet, and when they saw the two pale-faces standing in their midst, they raised a terrible whoop, which effectually awakened their comrades, and quickly surrounded the daring disturbers of their slumbers.

"Me kill, if fight—give up," said one of the savages, brokenly.

"Kill away, curse you!" said Stanhope, fiercely. "Shoot them down, Walter, and make an effort to escape, at least."

As he spoke, young Stanhope plunged his knife to the heart of the nearest Indian, and bounded through the opening made by his fall, uttering a loud and defiant yell. But ere he could run a dozen steps, several dark and brawny forms were upon him, and he was thrown to the ground and bound hand and foot in a moment.

"White man shall die—burn him at the stake," said one of his captors, triumphantly.

"Do you think to scare me?" retorted the young man, fearlessly. "Burn me as soon as you please—you will never get a groan of pain from me."

"White man thinks him very brave—when hot flames burn his flesh, he cry out like old squaw," laughed the Indian.

"You shall see," replied Stanhope, glaring savagely at his captors.

The Indians said no more, but two or three brawny fellows proceeded to drag their prize to the camp, while the others followed close behind, expressing their enjoyment of the scene by guttural grunts.

Darrell was also securely bound, he being too much overwhelmed with despair to make any resistance. The sudden transition from buoyant hope to the depths of despair had thrown him into a state of reckless stupor, and he did not realize his actual situation until he found himself bound to a small tree, a few feet distant from his similarly situated friend.

"Well, you see what your madness has brought us to?" said Stanhope, almost angrily.

"What does it matter, since Louisa cannot be found?" replied Darrell, who, lover-like, regarded his mistress as the only thing in the world worth living for.

"But my sister might have been found, had we prosecuted the search; but now we are powerless to aid her or ourselves. There is no escape from a terrible death."

"Forgive me, George," said Walter. "I was mad—I knew not what I did. After persuading myself that I was about to rescue the being who is dearer to me than life, to find in her place a total stranger, was more than I could bear."

"I forgive you, Walter—the blow was a terrible one. Perhaps we may have some chance to escape, although I have but little hope. Who can this poor captive be?"

"I know not. I only saw that she was a young and beautiful girl."

"Somebody's pet and darling, as Louisa was ours, no doubt," said Stanhope. "Walter, we must help the poor girl out of this, if we possibly can."

"We are in a position to help any one, are we not?" replied Darrell, grimly.

"True, we stand as much in need of help ourselves as any one, but we will not give way to despair. Evidently the red-skins do not intend to kill us to night, and who knows what may happen to-morrow."

"They will torture us, I suppose?"

"Without doubt. Unless we escape, our doom will be death at the stake."

"If your sister is dead, I will welcome any death, however terrible, so that my spirit may go to join hers in the world of shadows."

"You talk wildly, man," said Stanhope, impatiently. "It is not at all likely that my sister is dead. The savages would not murder one so young and beautiful. They would rather reserve her for a fate still worse, and if we would prevent her from becoming the wife of some brutal Camanche, we must escape and rush to her rescue."

"God save her from such a fate—death, indeed, were preferable. We must not die, George, while the sweet girl lives in such dreadful bondage. We must escape and go to her aid."

"What man can do, we will do; but had we the strength of Hercules, we could not burst the bonds that confine us."

"True, we are bound only too securely. Although I now feel within me the strength of a giant, these cords resist all my efforts. Oh, Louisa, my beautiful darling, would to God that I might help you—or, if that is impossible, that I might die with you!"

"Hush!" said George Stanhope, in a low voice. "The Indians are watching us, and if they imagine that we have any hope of escape or rescue, they will set a guard over us; but if we appear utterly hopeless and indifferent, they will all go to sleep again in a little while, which will give us a better chance to desert them."

"Why, what possible chance is there of escape?" asked Darrell.

"Hush—I have a faint hope, and only a faint one—but we must not talk any more—some of the rascals are coming to see that we are secure for the night."

Two or three of the red warriors approached our friends, and after satisfying themselves that the fastenings which confined the prisoners were all correct, they paused a moment before them, and looked into their faces with a grim, malicious smile.

"What white man think now—eh?" asked one who appeared to be the chief.

"I think you are the dirtiest scoundrel on the face of the earth," retorted Stanhope.

"White man burn at stake—never kill Injun any more."

"When do you intend to burn us?" asked Darrell.

"Ugh! soon enough, you think—when the sun come back once more."

"Well, do you think we care?" said Stanhope. "We are brave men, and are ready to die: none but old women and Indians are afraid of death."

"Pale-face much brave," said the Camanche, raising his hand and striking a severe blow on George Stanhope's cheek. But the young man did not flinch a muscle.

"Strike!" he said, fearlessly. "Plunge your knife into my heart, as I did to one of your braves—I will not quail—the white man is not a coward, like the Indian."

"Ugh!" grunted the chief, intensely disappointed by his captive's dauntless bearing. After staring at the prisoners a moment, he turned away, and threw himself down before the camp-fire, which example was soon followed by all the dusky braves.

In a few moments they were wrapped in slumber, and silence reigned throughout the encampment. Not a sound broke the solemn stillness of the night, save the mournful hooting of an owl in the tree-tops, and the distant howl of wolves, far away on the prairie.

The flickering flames of the camp-fire cast a weird, dim light over the prostrate bodies of the sleeping warriors, and over the bowed form of the female captive, who, with her head buried in her lap, seemed to be utterly indifferent to everything. But she was not asleep; her mind was wide-awake and active, and when the heavy breathing of the Indians convinced her that they were all asleep, she raised her head, and brushing the long dark hair away from her face, looked eagerly at the two young men bound to the trees. They were so much in the shadows that she could only discern a faint outline of their forms; but as she sat very near to the fire, her face was plainly visible to the young men.

"What a beautiful face!" said George Stanhope. "I never saw such perfect loveliness except in dreams. Walter Darrell, if we ever escape, that girl shall be my wife."

Despite his sadness, Darrell could not forbear smiling at his friend's words.

"Do not speak so loud," he said, "or you will arouse the red-skins. The girl is certainly beautiful, but she may belong to some one else, for all you know. At any rate, I see no prospect of your making her your wife in this world, but you may journey together to the world of spirits."

"We shall escape—I feel it—I know it," said Stanhope, in a confident whisper.

"Then a miracle must be worked in our behalf," replied Darrell.

"No, we shall escape by natural means. I told you awhile ago that I had a hope—and I will tell you the reason. I saw the girl make a signal to me, and when she had drawn my attention, she cautiously displayed a knife which she held in her hand. She must have got possession of the knife you dropped, and I am convinced that she will use it to free herself and us."

"Are you sure? Then, indeed, there is chance of escape, if—"

"Hush!" whispered George. "Look at the girl—she is already at work.

Such was indeed the case. Convinced that her captors were all unconscious, the beautiful maiden was using the knife swiftly and skilfully. As her hands were rather loosely confined, she soon had them at liberty, and then it was only the work of a moment to cut the thongs which bound her ankles. This done, she slowly rose to her feet.

"Thank Heaven, she is free!" said Stanhope, joyfully.

"Be still!" cautioned Darrell. "See, she still holds the knife in her hands—she is coming toward us—God grant that she may be successful."

Noiseless as a shadow the girl approached our friends. Her tall, slender form was bent, and her moccasined feet fell light as snow-flakes on the soft ground. The young men watched her movements with intense interest, scarcely daring to breathe lest they should awake their slumbering foes. The maiden glided close to Stanhope's side, and her sweet breath fanned his cheek, as she whispered:

"Do you wish to be free?"

"Life never seemed so sweet as at this moment," replied the young man.

"Then I will cut the thongs that bind you, and we will all escape together, or die in the attempt—and death would be much better than *such* a life."

"Ay, death with you would be bliss," said Stanhope, as the girl was severing his bonds.

"Now you are free," continued the girl in a cautious whisper. "Take the knife and release your friend, and let us be gone as quickly as possible."

A moment later, the three stood together in the shadow of the trees, free from the cramping thongs which had bound their limbs. Stanhope grasped the girl's hand in his.

"You have saved my life," he began, "and henceforth it is yours—"

"Hush!" said the girl, "there is no time for thanks. Let us escape while we can—come!"

"If we only had our rifles," said George, glancing toward the unconscious Indians.

"You must not attempt to get them," replied the girl. "You would certainly be discovered. We must fly as we are, and trust to Heaven to guide us in safety. I will lead the way—I am familiar with the forest and the prairie, for my life has been spent on the border. Follow me—for your lives, make no noise—come!"

Still holding Stanhope's hand, the maiden glided forward through the forest, and the young men silently followed her guidance. The darkness away from the camp fire was intense, and the fugitives could not see a step before them. They were obliged to proceed slowly, as numerous obstacles, in the shape of brush and fallen trees, obstructed the way. Ere they had proceeded more than twenty steps, George Stanhope stepped upon a dry branch, which broke with a sharp report.

"Ah, Heaven!" said the girl, "we are gone—that noise will alarm the entire camp."

"I think not," replied the young man, "they sleep too soundly."

"They are as easily waked as a watch-dog, and the least unusual sound will arouse them. We will remain perfectly still for a moment. Listen!"

The sound of gruff voices was heard, and presently a long, wild howl rang through the air.

"They have discovered our escape, and the woods will be full of them in a moment," continued the girl.

"Let us fly—we may outrun them—I will never be taken again alive," said Stanhope.

"Come—we are losing precious time," exclaimed Walter Darrell.

"It is useless," replied the girl, calmly. "We would be as likely to run into their clutches as to escape. The best thing we can do will be to conceal ourselves under these logs and branches for a time. Possibly the Indians may not find us, and while they are looking in some other direction we can slip away."

"A good plan," said George. "Here seems to be a natural hiding-place—let us conceal ourselves as securely as possible."

Accordingly the fugitives crawled into the narrow retreat, and crouched like wild animals beneath the damp logs and brush-wood, listening, with bated breath, to the blood-curdling yells of their savage pursuers.

The Indians, carrying flaring torches in their hands, darted back and forth through the wood, seeking for the trail of the whites, which they could not discover in the night. A part of them darted away to surround the tract of woods, thus rendering escape impossible; while others traversed the interior, looking into every place where they fancied the fugitives could be concealed. Several times some of them passed the pile of *debris* under which our friends were hiding; but strangely enough they passed on without examining it closely.

"Must we crouch here for hours like rats in their holes, only to be discovered at last?" muttered Stanhope, impatiently. "It would be better to get out and run for our lives."

"Hush!" cautioned the girl, laying her hand on the young man's arm. "Don't speak a word, for your life—our enemies are coming this way again."

Two brawny savages, one of them carrying a torch, approached. The one with the torch passed on a few steps, but the other proceeded to climb over the fallen trees, little suspecting, however, that the persons for whom he was searching were concealed directly beneath his feet.

The fugitives scarcely dared to breathe, and they feared that the loud throbbing of their hearts would betray them. The Indian scrambled over the decaying logs, grunting and puffing terribly. At length he stepped upon a branch which was too rotten to bear his weight, and he sank down, and landed upon Walter Darrell's prostrate body.

He gave vent to a yell of terror, but George Stanhope's hands upon his throat soon strangled the breath out of his wriggling body. But the yell drew the other Indian to the spot, and when the light of his torch revealed the scene, he uttered a loud and triumphant howl, and in a moment half of the band came rushing to the spot.

CHAPTER VI.

DEATH AT THE STAKE.

To overpower and bind the young men and the girl was the work of an instant, although the former made a desperate resistance. But, unarmed as they were, of course they could do nothing against a dozen stalwart savages. Their limbs were bound so tightly that the pain was almost unendurable, and they were hurried back to the place of encampment. The girl was bound securely to a tree; but the two young men were thrown on the ground back to back, and fastened in that uncomfortable position by strong cords. Not satisfied with these precautions, three Indians were stationed as sentinels, to prevent the possibility of escape or rescue.

As may be imagined, the feelings of the prisoners were not comfortable. George Stanhope ground his teeth in impotent fury. Darrell had given way to the torpor of despair. His last hope was gone, and he was utterly indifferent to the dreadful death which he knew awaited him. He thought of his elegant home in his gay native city—of the friends who would mourn his untimely end—with but little regret. True, he loved his home and his friends, as men love such things; but his heart, his soul, his very life, it seemed, were given to Louisa Stanhope—to the beautiful being who had appeared almost an angel from Heaven to his youthful fancy; and since she was gone, he did not care to live longer. Despite his friend's words, he believed that she was dead, or lost to him forever; and he almost prayed for a speedy death to end his misery.

If the captive maiden shrank in terror from her fate, she gave no sign of fear. Not a groan or a sigh escaped her. As the ghastly light of the fire revealed her graceful form, bound so cruelly close to the tree, she looked like a beautiful statue, so cold and pale was her face, so motionless her figure. Stanhope gazed intently at the lovely being; and when she turned her dark, mournful eyes upon his face, his blood seemed to turn to fire in his veins.

"Curse the cruel, dastardly brutes that can thus abuse one so innocent and lovely!" he muttered. "Oh, for the power to revenge myself upon them as they deserve!"

"White man groan—him feel very bad," said one of the sentinels, pausing before him, with a look of intense satisfaction on his hideously-painted face.

"You lie!" retorted Stanhope, fiercely. "Not all the hellish tortures that your whole tribe can invent, shall ever wring a cry or a groan from me."

"Ugh! we see—to-morrow squaws and children torment pale-face till him howl like wounded wolf."

"Because the Camanches are cowards, they think that the white men are the same; but they shall see that the pale-faces are not afraid of death in any form."

"Ugh!" grunted the Indian, angrily; and giving his prisoner a kick, he turned away, and kept his own counsel during the rest of the night.

Morning dawned at last, bright and beautiful. The day-god rose in the east, casting a rosy light over all the earth. The birds awoke from their slumbers, and filled the balmy air with song. But the golden morning, which aroused all Nature to joyful life, was to the wretched prisoners of the Camanches the harbingers of an awful death.

The warriors of the desert were soon astir. The horses were brought in from the prairie, where they had been grazing under the care of two or three of the band, and preparations were made for a journey. The captives, who had expected to be put to death at the dawn of morning, viewed these proceedings with some surprise.

Presently, one of the savages, whose fanciful adornments proclaimed him to be the leader of the band, approached the two young men, and regarded them a moment in silence.

"Pale-faces ready to die?" he at length asked, in harsh, guttural tones.

"Yes, we are ready. Why do you delay your infernal tortures?" replied Stanhope.

"They come soon enough," said the chief. "Pale-faces must ride to Camanche village, where squaws and children ready to help burn 'em—make heap fun."

And the Camanche smiled as he thought of the pleasure he was soon to enjoy.

"Well, do with us what you please—we care not for anything you can do," said the young man, who was far from being as indifferent as he tried to appear.

The chief motioned to some of his warriors, who approached, leading their small but mettlesome steeds. The cords that bound the two young men together, also those confining their ankles, were cut; and each one was placed astride a horse, and his feet tied together under the animal's breast; then an Indian brave mounted behind, to guide the horse, and prevent any possibility of escape.

The female captive was released from the tree, and placed on a horse before a brawny savage, whose sinewy arms held her slender form securely; and the band started on their way rejoicing.

The spirited ponies galloped briskly across the prairie, and toward noon the band arrived at the Camanche village, which was merely a collection of tents on the bank of a small stream. The surrounding plains were arid and desolate-looking, but along the stream the grass was green, and there were extensive groves of timber in places.

The returning warriors entered the village with a flourish. All the inhabitants, men, women and children, came rushing out to welcome them; and when they beheld the prisoners, they raised a loud and joyful shout, and many of them commenced dancing in the exuberance of their glee. The torture of a white man was to them a most delightful entertainment.

The captives were carried inside the medicine lodge, and the chiefs and warriors gathered around to decide on the best methods of torture. All were in favor of burning the men at the stake; but, by way of varying the amusement, they proposed to make one of them run the gauntlet first, well knowing that it would be scarcely possible for the unfortunate victim to escape unharmed the torrent of blows that would be rained upon him.

For the benefit of the reader, we will translate the Indian tongue into English.

"What shall be done with the girl?" asked the principal chief, who rejoiced in the name of Flying Arrow.

"I claim the girl as my property," replied the medicine-man.

The medicine-man's voice was peculiar, and the prisoners looked at him earnestly; and they were astonished to behold, beneath the paint that covered his face, the features of one of their own race. There was no mistaking this, for his eyes, instead of being small, black and snaky, like the Indian's, were large, intelligent, and of a dark gray color. His hair, however, was long and black, and a careless observer might have mistaken him for a real red-skin. How he came to be the medicine-man of the Camanches, no one but himself knew.

"What will the great medicine-man do with the white maiden?" continued the chief.

"The pale-face is very fair—she shall dwell in my tent as my squaw."

"A maiden of our tribe would be a more fitting mate for the great medicine-man."

"My heart is set upon the maiden with the snowy skin."

"It is well," said the chief. "The Flying Arrow can refuse nothing that the great medicine-man asks of him. She is yours. Now, warriors, prepare for the torture. Let all the children and squaws be armed with whips, clubs and knives, and let the pale-face feel the force of their blows."

The warriors hurried away, eager to commence the torture. Only the medicine-man, with two guards, remained in the tent with the prisoners.

"Do you know the fate that awaits you?" asked the medicine-man, in good English, and approaching close to the two young men.

"We do," replied George Stanhope. "We expect no mercy from the Camanches, much less from a white man who is so depraved as to join his fortunes with theirs."

"You have seen through my disguise, then?" said the pretended Indian, with a low laugh.

"Any child could do that, although your face is as ugly and brutal as any Camanche's."

"You flatter me," replied the medicine-man, grimly. "So you expect no mercy at our hands?"

"I have told you we do not."

"Well, you shall be shown none. The sight of your death agonies will be intense joy to me, for I hate your race with an undying hatred."

"Why should you entertain such unnatural sentiments?" asked Walter Darrell.

"I have good reasons, but I shall not unfold them to you. You must both die, but yonder beautiful girl pleases my eye—she shall be my squaw, my mistress, my slave."

"Never!" exclaimed Stanhope, his face flushing with anger.

"Ha! how will you prevent it?" sneered the medicine-man.

"God will prevent it—He will not permit the most beautiful creature that dwells in His world to be thus degraded—His vengeance will fall upon your guilty head."

The medicine-man burst into a low, scornful laugh.

"I fear neither God, man, nor devil," he said. "Such old women's superstitions cannot frighten me from my purpose. And surely the girl will prefer me, who am one of her own race, to a Camanche brave."

"Better death than either," replied Stanhope, bitterly.

"Ha, ha! death shall be your portion, my fine fellows; but the girl shall enjoy life, love and happiness with us. Why, I am not very old—and when this paint is off I am not so ugly either. The ladies used to call me a very handsome fellow—ha, ha! I think the young lady will fall in love with me when she comes to know me as I am. What do you say, my dear?" continued the villain, turning to the captive maiden. "Don't you like the looks of your husband very much?"

For answer, the poor girl buried her face in her hands and burst into tears.

"Well, well, I won't press my suit now—I'll have plenty of time when these younger and handsomer men are out of the way," continued the renegade, laughing. "I must leave you now, my friends, to see that your funeral ceremonies are properly attended to—for we intend to honor you with all the attentions possible."

"Stay a moment," said Darrell. "I beseech you, if you are a man, to answer me truthfully one question. Is there another captive girl in the hands of the Camanches?"

"There is not," answered the medicine-man; and his manner proclaimed that he was telling the truth.

"Poor Louisa!" What has become of her?" murmured the heart-broken lover.

"Was she your sweetheart?" asked the renegade, staring sharply at the young man.

"Yes," answered Darrell.

"Well, I am sorry to say that she is not in our hands. If she has gone to the happy hunting-grounds, you can soon join her—so let your mind be at ease. Good-bye, my friends, for a few moments."

The medicine-man departed, and only the two guards were left in the tent. They remained at a respectful distance, and the prisoners improved this last opportunity to converse together.

"Beautiful girl," said Stanhope, "we have seen each other but a few hours, and we are soon to be parted forever, but I feel a deep interest in your fate. Will you tell me something of your history?"

"If you care to hear it," replied the maiden, turning her dark, tearful eyes upon the young man's face. "My name is Myra Lowis. My father is a hunter, and we lived alone together in a little cabin on the edge of a vast prairie. We have lived there for years, and I am as familiar with border life as any of the old hunters. Yesterday morning, while my father was away, a band of Indians came dashing past our cabin, and I was bound and carried off. I see no chance of escape, but I will die by my own hand rather than be the wife of the human fiend who has just left us."

"There is indeed no chance of escape. When my friend and I rushed into the Indian encampment, last night, we mistook you for my sister, who was also carried off, as we thought, by the savages; but it seems that the Camanches know nothing about her, and where the poor girl is, God alone knows."

"Will you tell me your name?" asked the girl.

"Stanhope—George Stanhope. This is Walter Darrell, a New Orleans merchant, and my sister's lover."

"I have heard my father speak of a stock-raiser of the name of Stanhope."

"My father, I suppose—he owns a large ranche. Your father is—ha! here come some of the bloodthirsty fiends. I suppose the torture is about to begin!"

The medicine-man, followed by several warriors, entered the tent.

"Everything is in readiness," said the medicine-man, smiling upon the prisoners. Then, turning to the Camanches—"Warriors, bear them to the spot."

The braves needed no second bidding; roughly grasping the two young men, they carried, or rather dragged them out of the tent, and away to the place prepared for the torture. The renegade lifted the girl's light form in his arms, and bore her to the scene of action.

On the level plain, a little way outside the village, the whole tribe, including the women and children, were gathered to witness the savage ceremonies. Two stakes were driven into the ground about twenty feet apart; to one of these the girl was fastened, while George Stanhope was dragged to the other.

"What does this mean?" asked the young man, as the renegade was binding him to the stake. "Do you mean to burn the girl also?"

"Not at all," replied the renegade, with a harsh laugh. "Did I not tell you she was to be my wife? I thought she would like to witness the death of her friends, so I placed her where she could have a good view of the proceedings."

"Devil!" groaned Stanhope, struggling to break his bonds.

"Ha! ha!" laughed his tormentor, "these thongs are very strong, and I don't think you can break them. Now you can remain in peace for awhile, and watch your friend run the gauntlet. It will be amusing to see how the whips and clubs of the squaws will make him caper and dance."

(*To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 30.*)

THE BLACK FRIGATE.

Very many years ago—I need not specify how many, but it was before the Mediterranean had become the thronged highway that it is now—I, having put my house in order and arranged my affairs, decided to return to England, from which I had been absent more than twenty years. At the time of which I write, the East was to most of us an unexplored region; and when I went out, a young merchant, to try my fortune in the Levant, I was as much separated from home and kindred as I should have been on the other side of the globe.

Having ventured my all, I was obliged to cling to my adopted country; and though for a long time fortune so frowned on me that bare existence was a matter of difficulty, still little by little I got on, and toward the end of my twentieth year of absence from England I found myself with an unmarried daughter (I had been some years a widower), and a fortune amounting to upwards of twenty thousand pounds.

I think few girls could have boasted a rarer beauty than my Mary—now close on her seventeenth year—but of course, from the nature of the country in which she had been born and bred, she was deficient in many accomplishments she would have acquired at home, and it was for her sake that I gave up my plodding life of gain to go back to my home circle—dreadfully thinned, alas! since I had left it, a hopeful man of twenty-five.

Our preparations for departure, when once I had made up my mind, did not take long; for, though we had many friends of whom to take leave, still Mary was so childishly delighted with the prospect of going to England that everything was hurried on and we were soon ready to sail. The main difficulty that was in our way was the choice of a vessel.

Owing to the uncertain means that then existed for sending remittances, I was compelled to take home with me a very large sum in specie—nearly two thousand pounds—and for some time past the Mediterranean had been infested by pirates, one vessel in particular having attained a most unenviable notoriety from the bloodthirsty cruelty with which the crew treated the unfortunate passengers of any vessel which they captured.

After some consideration I decided upon embarking for Malta in a native coaster, as being a vessel which would hardly excite the cupidity of a pirate, should we be unfortunate enough to encounter one. The event proved that I was right, for we arrived at Malta quite safely, though after a long and tedious voyage.

When we got to Malta a large convoy of vessels was about to sail for England under the protection of two British men-of-war, and so rare was such an opportunity then, and so eager were people to get their goods and themselves home in safety, that every ship going had even more passengers than they could properly accommodate, and my eager search for two cabins for Mary and myself was fruitless.

I was at last about to give up the attempt in despair, and take my chance of a passage in any single vessel which might be going in the course of a week or so. I thought less of the danger of meeting with a pirate than of Mary's discomfort on the voyage; for, after all, I believed the tales of the atrocities which people said these rovers perpetrated were much overdrawn, and, besides, the worst of them, known as the Black Frigate—from the color of the hull—had not been seen in the Southern waters for some time past, and it was thought that, finding the pursuit after her too keen, she had left them altogether.

I mentioned what I intended doing, one evening, to Paolo Speranza, a Maltese trader, of whom I had some slight knowledge, and with whom we had taken up our abode; but he shook his head gravely and replied—

"No, sare; one sheep no good—too much pirate, too much bad man. Suppose meet Black Frigate, eh? Young miss go too? No; much better sail with sheep of war, even suppose you lib on deck, sare?"

I combated his view for a time, but, finding him seriously opposed to my incurring any risk while with my daughter, and in possession of such a large sum of money (he knew what I had with me), I consented to his trying to get me a passage, as his better knowledge of the shipping agents might enable him to be more successful than I had been.

Two days went by, and in two more the convoy would sail at latest, when on the morning of the third a large British vessel, the Maggie Lauder, laden with wool, ran in from Alexandria. Speranza knew the captain, and endeavored to obtain a passage for me, for some time in vain, as every bulk-head was crammed with the cargo—one so valuable, that the master intended to go with the convoy without staying at Malta as he had originally proposed. After some demur, however, Speranza succeeded in getting a deck cabin divided into two parts for my daughter and myself; and, thanking my Maltese friend heartily for his kindness, I at once arranged to go on board.

The Maggie Lauder was a very handsome vessel, with a gandily-emblazoned figure-head and stern. From the run of her lines, and the jaunty way in which she sat the water, I judged that she was a fast sailer; nor was I wrong in my conjecture. The captain—a Levantine—was most obliging in getting in our luggage, and told off an officer especially to watch in my chests of specie. I had disguised them as much as possible, but from habit—as I supposed—he seemed to recognize their value at once.

The captain's apologies for the rough way in which he would be compelled to lodge us were profuse, but were really not needed, as, though small, the cabins were comfortably fitted up; and, as for their being on deck, I considered it a decided advantage in that sultry climate. Mary's attendant—a soldier's young widow, whom we had secured at Malta—was to sleep on the floor of her mistress's cabin; and altogether our arrangements were as perfect as could well be expected, and we might fairly look forward to a pleasant voyage home.

It was on a calm, clear, but oppressively hot morning in June, that the convoy at last set sail, and, aided by a light breeze, we went slowly upon our way through the waste of waters. I was busy enough all day unpacking, and had but little leisure to go on deck all the evening; but, as the sun went down, I stood leaning over the taffrail watching the changing hues of the fleecy clouds as the sun sank lower and lower—now green, now gold, red, violet, blue, finally changing to a slatey gray, as the orb sank beneath the waves.

I think that a feeling of sadness is common to every one during the first night at sea. The hues of night creeping over the waters, through which the ship glides so calmly, the canvas-clad spars looming above like gigantic ghosts, the endless gurgle of the water as it ripples past, broken only by the monotonous cries of the look-out man, or the creaking of the helm—all these make one feel how utterly alone one is exposed to all the dangers of the deep.

I was musing thus, idly watching the gilded crests of the phosphorescent waves, when I felt a cautious touch on the arm, and, turning, saw, to my surprise, an Italian sailor whom I had known in the Levant—and, indeed, once saved from almost certain death—standing near me. The sight of the face of any one I had known was grateful to me at the moment, and I was about to greet him loudly and gladly, when I was stopped by his trending hard on my foot, and whispering—

"Hush! For your life speak not above a whisper or we are lost!"

Before my amazement would let me reply, he went on—

"*Mon Dieu!* that I had known this sooner! but I was away on shore at Malta. They tell me you have a fair young girl on board with you, too. Do I deceive myself?" he added, rapidly.

"No, surely," I answered. "My daughter accompanies me, and we considered ourselves lucky in obtaining a passage in a vessel guarded by the convoy."

"Lucky, say you?" returned Jacobo. "Yes, truly. See you how every ship with which we left Valetta this morning is sinking low upon the wave?"

I turned, and saw, to my astonishment, that we had slightly changed our course, and that all the convoy were already "hull down" upon the horizon.

"What folly of the captain to part company like this," I exclaimed, "risking his whole cargo falling into the hands of pirates!"

"No fear of that for us," interrupted Jacobo, with a sneer.

"True," I replied: "the Black Frigate has left these seas; but still—"

"Madman without caution!" hissed Jacobo fiercely into my ear, clutching my wrist convulsively as he spoke; "'tis on the Black Frigate you are sailing—you and your daughter are beneath its flag!"

The water still gurgled past us, and I could still hear the creaking of each rope and block, as it seemed, with extra distinctness; but yet I could not comprehend, though I had heard the words that Jacobo had uttered. How could I be on board the vessel?

"Listen, then," said Jacobo. "How I came to be on board this vessel matters not; it is enough that I tell you that of late we have been so hotly pursued in these seas that for a time we were obliged to leave them, and only within the last ten days have we returned, as you see now. 'Twas a bold expedient to go into Malta as we did, but the very boldness of the manœuvre, and the altered appearance of the vessel, was our safety. Speranza is our paid agent, and it was to his knowledge of the wealth you have with you that you owe your passage in this fatal ship. *Padrone*, your life here hangs on a thread; but I do not forget what you once did for me, and I will save you if I can; but appear as though you were at ease, and mind you know me not. While the English are in sight, you are safe—ah, even now they signal us!"

As he spoke, a slight flash in the distance glanced over the darkening waters, followed after the lapse of a few seconds by a faint distant boom, showing that the convoy were aware of the alteration in our course, and were signalling us to return.

Jacobo instantly darted from my side, motioning to me hastily to go into my cabin, and just after I had reached it the captain and a thick-set young man, with a stern, brutal-looking face, as far as I could judge by the binnacle-light, came on deck.

I lay down in my berth, pretending to sleep, but endeavoring through the *jalousies* to hear what conversation might ensue. For a time my heart throbbed painfully and the veins in my head seemed almost bursting; but by degrees I calmed myself down sufficiently to gather some few words of the whispered conversation that ensued between Jacobo, the pretended captain, and his companion, whom I soon discovered, from the manner of the other two, to be the presiding authority on board. As they spoke, I somehow fancied that Jacobo drew them toward the cabin where I lay, for the voices grew plainer and plainer.

"Well, we can end it now, Jack," said the real captain to the one whom I had first seen; "but, mark ye, overboard the women go! The last time there was a job of this sort, I nearly had a mutiny through the men quarrelling among themselves, and I'll not have it again."

"Would it not be better," said Jacobo, "to leave all as it is till to-morrow? The English war-vessel has fired one gun to us already: if they chase and catch us, and ask for the Englishman Derwent and his daughter, and we have them not—how then?"

A pause of a second or two ensued—a lifetime it seemed to me as I crouched behind the blind, a cold sweat of agony pouring down my forehead. Jacobo, in whom lay the only hope of a chance I had, could he, too, be a traitor planning our murder like that? Yet why had he told me? My poor child, too—I ground my teeth in impotent rage as I thought of the trap into which I had been betrayed.

"Perhaps you are right, Jacobo, and I must wait, though I grudge keeping the men below so long; however, to-morrow will end this farce—see, another gun!"

A faint report, wafted to us on the breeze, showed how rapidly we were being carried from our only protectors. Another gun sounded—as it seemed, somewhat nearer—and the captain, turning suddenly, gave a shrill whistle, and cried, "Tumble up there, the watch: shake another reef out of those topsails—up stu'n'sails!"

The noise of cables and the tramping of the sailors' feet on deck now drowned every other sound, but in a very few minutes I could perceive from the heeling of the vessel that we were going through the water at a greater rate, leaving all hope behind.

I need not waste words now detailing the horrors of the night that ensued; the wind rose and howled dismally through the rigging, while the heavy plash of waves against the sides of the vessel served only to remind me of the fate that was in store for myself and my only child.

When the morning broke the rain was pouring down heavily, and the waves fell one over another in heavy, lumpy masses, and, as the ship was running before the wind, she rolled so heavily as almost to dip her yards in the water. When I went on deck everything was wet and uncomfortable, and to my horror not a sail of any description was in sight: my last hope was now gone, and I had to undertake the dreadful duty of telling my poor child of the situation in which we were placed.

The insolent carelessness with which we were treated at breakfast, to a certain extent prepared her for my revelation; but I shall never forget my poor girl's aspect of dread horror when I told her the extent of the danger which we had to fear. I explained to her that the slightest appearance of fear on our parts would probably be the signal for precipitating the doom we were both so anxious to avoid, and our wisest discretion would be to keep within our cabins as closely as possible, not giving a sign of our having any suspicion as to the real character of the vessel.

The day crept slowly away, and the sun sank into the waters; the last tinge of crimson faded on the waves that now rolled toward the stern windows in dismal billows, where Mary and I sat hand in hand, waiting, every moment seeming an hour, in an agony of suspense. Mary's attendant had left the cabin a few minutes before, when suddenly a scream, the shrill terror of which rings through my head even now, resounded through the vessel, followed by a souffle, a smothered cry of "Mercy!—Mr. Derwent!—mercy!" a heavy splash, and for a moment all was still, save for the plash of the heaving waters.

After a short pause, the sound of approaching footsteps made me spring to my feet, a loaded pistol in either hand—for I was determined to sell my child's life and my own as dearly as possible.

"Quick, there, Jacobo!" I heard the captain say, and in an instant the outer door and the door between Mary's cabin and mine were burst open, and Jacobo and another man rushed in, locking the outer door after them, and each bearing a large sack with a slip-knot running round the neck, to which a heavy shot was attached.

Mary flung herself on the floor with a fearful scream, and as I fired at Jacobo he struck the pistol up, and when the smoke rolled away I saw that the carpet was thrown back, and Jacobo had opened a trap-door in the deck.

"In! in!" he exclaimed.

I needed no second invitation, but immediately descended, and, receiving Mary's now senseless form in my arms, had just time to see two bags of meal standing near thrust into the sacks, when the trap was closed and the carpet readjusted, leaving us in darkness, and in such a dense and stifling atmosphere that it was almost impossible to breathe. I heard the bumping of the sacks as they were dragged through the outer cabin, a burst of brutal and discordant laughter as two successive splashes sounded in the sea, and then all seemed to swim round me, and I became insensible.

I know not how long I remained thus, but I was aroused by Mary clinging tightly to me just as the captain was giving some order relating to the adjustment of the sails.

"There, belay all that!" he suddenly

exclaimed. "And half-a-dozen of ye clear out all the trumpery out of the cabin; we'll have a rouser there to-night."

A trampling of feet now sounded as though coming toward us, when I heard Jacobo say—

"Steady, my lads, I have to fetch flour for the pastry; wait there, and I'll return on the moment."

Directly afterward the trap was raised and Jacobo descended.

"Ah, *padrone*," said he, "you see I am not ungrateful. I would have saved all, but 'twas impossible; as it is, my life is in the hand of the comrade whom I bribed to save you. But there is not a moment to be lost: I have the keeping of the stern-hold. Look you, here be two rows of meal sacks fore and aft. If you, mam'selle, can hide behind the one, and you, *padrone*, behind the other, you may have in some sort two 'leetle' chambers to yourselves after the English fashion, or, if you prefer the same hiding-place, take it, in Heaven's name, but lose not a moment."

"And what will be the end of this?" I asked, after some hurried expressions of gratitude.

"I cannot say," he replied. "I will from time to time, when I descend to get meal and clean the place, bring you provisions. How long this can last, whither we are going, and whether in the end I can rescue you, time must show. If we should shortly put into some port, I may be able to pass you ashore in one of these sacks, but we may not see land for a month—any way, for your lives keep quiet. I doubt you'll be stifled, yet there's no help for it. Hide, hide! I dare not stay a moment longer."

He rolled down a heap of biscuits, placed a pitcher of water by them, and departed.

Never will our first fearful night in our strange concealment be forgotten. The pirate crew held wild revelry over our heads; their fierce and iniquitous speech, their lawless songs, their awful and demoniac oaths, their wild intoxication, made Mary thrill with a horror that half excited the wish to escape in death from the polluting vicinity of such infernal abominations. The hold was so shallow that we appeared to be close to the revellers. Their voices sounded so near that we seemed almost among them, and our concealment a miracle; while the heat became so stifling and unbearable that we could scarcely gasp, and I began to fear that Mary would become exhausted.

It was a strange reflection that we might, almost without the warning of a moment, be in the hands of our brutal and unconscious gaolers; for our concealment afforded not even the slender defence of an inside lock or bolt, and the carpet, which seemed to present a slight barrier between us and the gang, had been rolled up, as no longer necessary to give our late dwelling place the peaceful appearance of a cabin fitted up for passengers.

The light streamed here and there through the crevice in the trap-door, and I involuntarily trembled when I saw it fall on Mary's white dress, as if, even in that concealment, it might betray her. We dared scarcely whisper a word of encouragement or consolation to each other—dared scarcely to breathe, or stir even a hand from the comfortless attitude in which we were placed. We could even hear the crew speak occasionally of our murder in a careless and accidental manner.

At length the orgie came to an end, and exhausted from excitement I fell asleep. I was aroused somewhere near morning by a conversation between the captain and his mate, who went by the name of Jack; apparently they had been speaking for some time.

"I suppose, captain," said Jack, "we go on our usual plan, eh?—the specie to be distributed among the ship's company, and the jewels and personals to be appropriated in a quiet way by the officers? And for once in a way I hope there'll be no breach of discipline, Captain Don Iseng, in asking where might be deposited that second casket containing, you and I, and one or two more, know what? I mean that we took from the Spanish-American brig."

"It is in the stern-hold beneath our feet at this moment," answered the captain.

"A good time for dividing its contents," said Jack. "I'll fetch a light in the twinkling of an eye."

"No need," replied the captain—"I'll warrant I can lay my hand on it in the dark."

Without the warning of another moment the fierce commander was in our hold. On the removal of the trap-door a faint light streamed into our prison; but it fell only on the part immediately under the ingress, and left the sides in obscurity.

I suppose it was about four in the morning. I had laid Mary down on some torn signal flags in that division of the hold which Jacobo had assigned her, and had myself retired behind my own bulwark of meal sacks, in order that my daughter should possess, for her repose, something like the freedom of a small cabin to herself. I had scarcely time to glide round to Mary's side ere the merciless buccaneer descended. We almost crept into the wooden walls of our hiding-place, and literally drew down the sacks upon us.

The captain felt about with his hand, sometimes pushing it behind the sacks, and sometimes feeling under them. And now he passed his arms through those which aided our concealment. Gracious Heaven! his hand had discovered Mary's dress; he grasped it tight; he began to drag her forward, but at this moment his foot struck against the casket for which he was searching. He stooped to seize it; and, as his hold on Mary slackened, I contrived to pass toward his hands a portion of the old flag-cloth, so as to impress him with the belief that it was the original object of his grasp. He dragged it forward and then let it go.

But he had disturbed the compact adjustment of the sacks, and, as the vessel was now rolling violently in a tempestuous sea, a terrible lurch laid prostrate our treacherous wall of defence, and we stood fully exposed without a barrier between ourselves and the ruffian commander of the frigate. To me it now seemed that all was lost; and I leaned over Mary, just to clasp my own bosom as a slender and last defence.

The captain had gone to the light to pass his casket through the trap-door. The sun was rising; and the crimson hues of dawn, meeting no other object in the hold save the depraved and hardened countenance of our keeper, threw on his swarthy complexion such a ruddy glow as, contrasted with the surrounding darkness, gave him the appearance of some foul demon emerging from the infernal regions, and bearing on his unhallowed countenance the reflection of the eternal fires he had just quitted.

That glow was however, our salvation. The captain turned, with an oath, to replace the fallen sacks. Any one who has extinguished a candle, even on a bright starry night, knows that the sudden transition from a greater to a lesser degree of light, produces, for a moment or two, the effect of absolute darkness: and thus our concealment lay enveloped in utter darkness to the captain's eyes, dazzled by the morning's first flood of light. But it was difficult for the half-breathless beings so entirely in his power to realize this fact, when they saw him advancing toward them, his eyes fixed on the spot where they stood, though he saw them not: it was difficult to see, and yet retain a conviction that they were not seen.

The captain replaced the sacks immediately, and we felt half doubtful, as he pushed them with violence against the beams where we stood, whether he had not actually discovered our persons, and taken this method of at once destroying us by bruises and suffocation. His work was, however, accompanied by an imprecatory running comment on Jacobo's careless manner of stowage.

We were now again buried in our concealment, but another danger awaited us. Jacobo descended to the cabin.

An involuntary though half stifled shriek escaped him when he beheld the captain. He sprang into the hold, and his ghastly smile of inquiry—for he spoke not—demanded if his ruin was sealed.

"I have been looking at your pretty work here, monsieur," said the gruff captain, pointing to the deranged sacks behind which we were concealed.

I caught a glimpse through them of Jacobo's despairing countenance. It was a fearful moment, for it seemed as if we were about to be involuntarily betrayed by our ally at the very instant we had escaped our enemy.

Jacobo's teeth literally chattered, and he muttered something about gallantry and honor, and there being a lady, and Mr. Derwent an old acquaintance.

"And so, because you disposed of a couple of lubbers, as your duty was, at your captain's command, you think he must not even see to the righting of his own stern hold?" said the captain, with a gruff and abortive effort at pleasantry, for he felt Jacobo's importance in amusing and keeping in good humor the motley crew. Jacobo's answer showed that he was now enlightened. And thus we had a fourth rescue from the very jaws of death.

Day after day passed away, and still we were the miserable, half-starved, half-suffocated, though unknown prisoners of this demon gang, holding our lives, as it were, by a thread, hanging in the most terrible suspense between time and eternity, and counting every prolonged moment of our existence as a miracle. Jacobo at this period rarely dared visit us; he came only when the business of the ship actually sent him. The cabin above was now occupied at nights by the captain and some of his most depraved associates, so that small alleviation of our fears, small relation from our comfortless prison, small occasion of addressing a few consolatory words to each other, was afforded us by either day or night.

At length I began to fear that Mary would sink under the confined air and the constant excitement; her breath became short and difficult; the blood passed through her veins in feverish yet feeble and intermittent pulsation. It was agony to feel her convulsed frame and hear her faintly drawn and dying breath, and know that I could not carry her into the reviving breezes of Heaven, nor afford a single alleviation of her suffering without at once snapping that thread of life which was now wearing away by a slow and lingering death.

At length her respiration began to partake of the loud and irrepressible character which is so often the precursor of dissolution. She deemed her hour drawing nigh, yet feebly essayed, for my sake, to stifle those last faint moans of expiring nature which might betray our concealment. I became sensible that the latter could not much longer remain a secret, and, with a strange calmness, made up my mind for the coming decisive hour. I supported Mary's head, poured a faltering prayer into her dying ear, wiped the death dews from her face, and endeavored to whisper some expressions of affection and consolation. Happily for me, there was such a tempest of wind and sea as drowned the expiring sighs of my child.

At this moment Jacobo descended to the hold. He put his finger significantly on his lips and whispered—

"Courage! rescue! There's a sail in the offing, on our weather bow. Our captain marks her not; but I have watched her for some time with a glass, and, if she be not a British sloop-of-war, my eyes and the glass are deceivers altogether."

I grasped Mary's hand; she feebly returned the pressure and murmured, "Too late."

Ere the lapse of a minute it was evident that our possible deliverer had been discovered by the crew, for we could hear by the bustle of feet and the noise of voices that the ship was being put about, and the harsh voice of the buccaneer chief was heard even above the roar of the waters giving hasty orders to urge on the vessel.

Jacobo promised to bring us more news, and quitted us. The rush of air into the hold seemed to have revived Mary, and my hopes began to rise. It was soon evident, however, that the crew were using every effort to avoid our hoped for deliverer. After a while the wind abated, the ship became steadier, and certainly made less way. A voice over our heads said distinctly, in French, "The sloop signals us to lay to!" A low murmured conversation now ensued, and then again I heard the same voice exclaim, "The sloop is chasing!"

Of anything like the anxiety of those moments is is impossible for me to convey an idea. I felt that if aid could only arrive all would be well, but to have my child dying before my eyes was more than I could bear, and I was once or twice almost tempted to take her in my arms, rush on deck, and appeal to the mercy—if any was to be found—of the crew. Thank Heaven now I did not yield!

At length Jacobo descended.

"The sloop is gaining upon us fast—we are about to clear for action!"

"Thank Heaven!" I fervently ejaculated.

"We know not yet what the result will be," he replied; "our captain has, I am told, before this beaten a larger vessel than that which is now chasing us—but we must hope for the best; any way he has hoisted the black flag, and that means 'victory or death.'"

"But have his mixed crew," I inquired, anxiously, "ever encountered a British foe of equal strength?"

"I cannot say; I have been but a short time with him—and I propose to myself to get away as soon as it is possible."

We now heard all the noise of the preparations for the approaching combat, cannon being lashed, firearms got ready, concealed ports thrown open, and the men harangued by the captain in terms calculated to arouse their brute courage and excite their cupidity.

Comparative silence now ensued, and it was evident that a very liberal allowance of grog was being served out. While the men were drinking it, the captain and some of the principals of the crew came into the cabin, and to my horror I heard them register a secret and most horrible oath to scuttle the vessel if they were defeated, and to thus sink both captives and captors in one common grave.

The worst was now come at last; so long as there had been a possibility of escape I had been in an agony of excitement, but, now that death was certain whichever vessel gained the day, the calm of utter despair came upon me, and I turned, intent only on soothing the dying moments of my child.

Not a ray of light now penetrated through the chinks of the trap-door, and from the noise of the falling weights I was inclined to think that shot had been placed over the mouth of our prison, thereby effectually sealing our doom should the pirates keep their dreadful oath of scuttling the vessel. Anyway, the noise of preparation had in it something inspiriting to the ear, and, as it effectually drowned every other sound, I drew Mary from behind the sacks into the most roomy part of our wooden dungeon, and endeavored by fanning her with my handkerchief to create a little freshness of air around her, when suddenly I heard a shot fired, evidently from the sloop, and almost directly after a hoarse hail of—"Ship ahoy! heave to, or we'll sink you!"

The answer to this was a sudden broadside from the frigate, and the very wooden walls around us seemed coming asunder, so great was the force of the concussion. After the pause of a minute or two a broadside was fired by the sloop, apparently directed more at our rigging, for the crash of the spars falling on deck seemed almost to deafen me, and from the execrations and curses which followed it was evident that many of the crew had been injured by them. The broadsides continued; our vessel reeled to and fro, and sometimes half rose out of the water with the violence of the shocks she received: and I heard her masts cracking and her timbers flying in every direction, yet still her men continued their yells of triumph, and their guns seemed to be served with as much spirit as ever.

At length on both sides the firing appeared to slacken. One of the vessels was evidently approaching the other for the purpose of boarding, but which? Which had been successful? My heart almost ceased to beat from intense expectation. The heavy grinding of the two ships against each other's side was soon heard, and an instant after the shouts of the sloop's crew rose triumphantly over our heads. Long and desperately raged the combat above us, but the pirates' yell waxed fainter and fainter, while the victorious shouts of the men-of-war's men, mixed with the frequent exclamations of "No quarter, no quarter to pirates!" became each moment louder.

At length all sounds of conflict seemed to cease; but there was still so much noise that, although I shouted with all the strength that was left to me, I was unable to make myself heard on deck, and the trap-door was immovable.

At this moment the ship, which had hitherto been springing and reeling from the concussion of her guns, suddenly began to settle into an awful and suspicious state of quiescence. I perceived only too clearly that she was about to settle for sinking. After the lapse of a brief interval the conquerors became aware of the treacherous gulf that was preparing to receive them, and a hundred voices exclaimed—

"To the sloop—to the sloop! The vessel is sinking!"

I now screamed out till I thought my head would burst, and battered at the trap-door till my hands were covered with blood. All was in vain. I heard the sailors rushing eagerly to their own vessel, and abandoning that of the pirates to destruction, and I could only clasp my child to me and try to pray; but my lips seemed parched, and the words refused to come.

In the dread silence that now ensued the rush of the water through the holes where the vessel had been scuttled could be plainly heard. She soon began to go down with a rapidity that seemed to my excited fancy to send us every instant many feet deeper beneath the waves, and I knew that in a very few minutes we should be engulfed.

I tried to rouse Mary, but she lay quiet and lifeless, and I thought her strength had succumbed at last. Suddenly I heard steps on deck; weights seemed to be removed from the trap-door; it was opened, and a voice exclaimed—

"Good Heavens! the fellow was right! Here they are sure enough!"

An officer, two sailors, and Jacobo, bound, stood there. Mary was instantly lifted out, and then, like one in a dream, dazzled by the light, I crawled up on deck. Perhaps it was as well that Mary was unconscious, as the deck of the sinking vessel was no sight for a woman; for there lay, in every attitude, the mangled bodies of our late dreaded gaolers, their faces distorted by fierce rage.

Never shall I forget the scene of desolation which the ship presented at that moment, lying like a vast plank or raft of dead bodies, almost level with the sea, the waters of which dashed furiously over it, and then, receding from their still ineffectual attempt to overwhelm the vessel, returned, all dyed with crimson, to the ocean, while the sun, setting in an angry sky, threw his rays for the last time in fitful lurid gleams on the doomed ship.

A deep, long sigh escaped from Mary on our reaching the open air, and I turned to thank our deliverers: but the sea was gaining on us fast, and there was no time for words; I begged, however, to be allowed to sever Jacobo's bonds to enable him to get into the boat with us, and we soon afterward reached the sloop.

MINNY'S FALL.

BY LETTICE THORPE.

"No, Helen, I never would offer myself to a woman until quite sure that she would accept me."

"And how is your honor to know without asking?"

"Oh, an affectionate woman cannot help betraying it in some way, if she is really in love."

"Pshaw! Charley, you young men have such wonderful knowledge of our sex, and such sublime confidence in your own judgments respecting us. Let me tell you, sir, that pride keeps many a woman from betraying her preference."

"I am not talking of *proud* women, I want nothing to do with that style—cold and passionless. Give me the sweet, frank, impulsive creature that is not ashamed to let a man see she cares for him."

"Sweet, frank, impulsive creature! Oh, Charley! In other words, a little soft, mincing, sentimental idiot, that hasn't sense enough to keep her fancies to herself, Minny!" and the speaker turned to a mischievous-looking brunette, seated very demurely at her embroidery. "Minny, haven't you anything to say upon this important question? Charles is sneering at proud women. Aren't you going to defend yourself?"

"Am *I* proud?" she inquired in return, with a look of questioning innocence, that changed suddenly to one of blushing confusion, as she encountered the gentleman's admiring gaze.

"Are *you* proud, Miss Innocence? Didn't my country cousins call you a stuck-up minx? Of course you are, and what is worse still, you are proud of your pride."

"Why, Helen, you are making me out a terrible case; Mr. Forsyth will be disgusted."

"That were impossible," he said in a low voice as he passed by her side out of the room.

"What did he say, Minny?" inquired his cousin, after he had gone.

"Oh, some polite nonsense, that my own speech called forth, that was all. But how foolishly sensitive men are about being refused, I do not see why they take it so much to heart. I think it is absurd for a man to feel the refusal of one woman so deeply, when he knows there are plenty of others ready to say yes in a moment."

"True, but he does not want the others, and it must be a great disappointment."

"Disappointment! Of course, but we were not talking of that. It is the humiliation your cousin means to avoid. I am afraid that he will live and die a bachelor."

"I am afraid so too, if he waits for *you* to betray your preference."

"Nonsense, Helen, he has never given me any reason."

"Of course not, has he not just said that he would never tell his love until quite sure of a return. It is the only unmanly thing I ever heard him say."

"You are very severe, Helen."

"Because he is such a dear, good fellow, that I do not like to have him betray so much vanity, for that is at the bottom of it, you know, Minny. I wish something dreadful would happen to you, dear."

"Well, really, I am very much obliged to you. Shall I break my neck for your especial gratification? Would you like to have me jump out of the window, or into the lake?"

"No, but I want you to frighten him in some way. It would be such fun to *make* him speak."

"Oh, Helen, I should be ashamed."

"Pshaw! I'll tell you how to manage it. Make your horse run away, and pretend that you are terribly hurt."

"I won't do anything of the kind, I hate such things."

"Who's to know? I never shall tell, and if you don't do it, you and Charles will go on in this way for years and years, and then you will marry some man you do not care a pin for, just out of pique, and lose the kindest, most generous-hearted fellow in the world, whose vanity only needs a little lesson. You can jump off your horse, and then send him home, and I shall see Charles's face, when the riderless steed makes his appearance. All that I am afraid of is that I shall not be able to keep my countenance. Come, Minny, say you'll do it, and I'll promise to accompany you when you go back to New York."

"Will you really, Helen?"

"Yes, I will, if you'll agree to what I propose."

"Well, I would do almost anything for the sake of having you go home with me, even a mean contemptible thing like that, though I hate the very thought of it."

"You are too high-toned, Minny, altogether. But I would not ask you to do it for any other man."

Helen Rodney was an orphan, living with her uncle, the father of Charles Forsyth, for whom she felt all the love and tenderness of a sister, which affection was as warmly returned by him, although they had never indulged in any cousinly flirtations whatever; indeed, it had long been a favorite scheme of hers, that Minny Hamilton, her school-girl friend, should become her cousin's wife. She felt quite convinced that they were mutually attached, but feared that pride would keep them apart. The next morning Charles was reading in his own room, when he heard Helen's voice in the garden calling to him, and begging that he would come down and see some strange plant that had just bloomed. "But where is Miss Hamilton?" he inquired, after the flower had been duly examined and admired.

"She went off riding on the white pony."

"What, alone?"

"No, she intended getting Anna Ripley to join her, their horses trot so nicely together, but—oh, Charley, there comes the horse without any rider. Minny must have been thrown. Run, run and see."

He did not wait to be told, however, but went off like the wind in the direction that the horse had come, while Helen ran into the house to indulge in a wicked laugh at her cousin's expense. Then she sat down to await the denouement of the adventure; growing very impatient, however, as the moments passed without either Charles or Minny making their appearance. Finally, however, to her utter amazement and chagrin, she saw the latter dragging herself slowly up the hill upon which the house was situated. She ran out at once to meet her, her spirits sinking lower and lower, as she caught the expression of the young girl's face.

"What is the matter?" she cried; "what makes you look so—"

"Mad? Yes," exclaimed Minny, petulantly, "that is just the way I *feel*. I have made a fool of myself, and hurt my ankle into the bargain, and there's the end of your interesting scheme, Miss Rodney. I am so mad, so—"

"Oh, Minny, don't be angry with me, I am so sorry. But let me help you, and tell me how it all happened. Didn't you see Charles? He flew off as if he had been shot."

"He's a brute, Helen, I hate him. I never want to see him again! Conceited puppy!"

"Why, you poor child, do tell me all about it!"

"Just wait until I reach my room, and can lie down, then I will tell you the whole charming story, but I shall go home just as soon as my foot is well enough, and I never will speak to him again as long as I live. Never!"

So Helen assisted her to her chamber, and examined the injured ankle, which was indeed much bruised and swollen: but her aunt soon appearing to offer her kindly aid, the fretful expression passed from the young girl's face, and she rewarded their efforts to make her comfortable with her usual sweet and sunny smile. Poor Helen, in the meantime, was dying with impatience to hear the story, and as soon as the two girls were alone, she exclaimed—

"Now, darling, tell me all about it."

"Why, Helen, I played my part like a bungler, as I knew I should. The horse sprang forward just as I prepared to jump, and I fell with my ankle under me, upon a stone. I was thankful enough to lie back, and pretend insensibility. But when Mr. Forsyth reached the place, and taking me in his arms, called me his sweet Minny, some exasperating spirit took possession of me, and I laughed in his face like an idiot."

"Oh, Minny, what made you?"

"I don't know, I tell you; it was just like me. I always knew I hadn't any sense."

"But what did Charles do then?"

"Why, he dropped me, the mean fellow, just as if I had been a log of wood. I never will look at him again, never! Your beautiful romance has ended delightfully, hasn't it? The gallant lover leaves the lady rolling in the dust, to get home as she can. I hate him! I despise him!"

"But he did not know that you were hurt, of course, or he never would have left you, even if he did suspect a trick. There he comes now up the hill."

"Indeed! How does the mighty gentleman look?"

"Very black, Minny, I must confess, but he will apologise, I know, when he hears that you are hurt. I will leave you now, and let you try to sleep."

"I shall not sleep, and I shall not accept his apologies. I hate him and myself, and—"

"Not *me*, Minny, I hope. I thought I should bring you two together, and we should all be so glad; but good-bye for the present;" and kissing the tired girl, she went to meet her cousin.

"Why, Charles," she began, in reproachful tones, "how could you treat Minny as you did? She hurt her foot very badly, and will be confined to her room, probably, for several days."

"Hurt, Helen! did you say that she was hurt?"

"Of course I did, and you left her so strangely, to crawl up here all by herself. She is very much offended, I assure you."

"Why, Helen, she laughed in my face, and I thought it was all a trick just to make a fool of me."

"Girls generally laugh when they are pleased."

"Don't be absurd, Helen; but I did not dream that she was hurt. Go and apologise to her for me, that's a good girl, and give her this rose with my sincere regrets."

Helen did not wait for anything more, but flew up to Minny's room, to find her still awake and crying bitterly.

"Why, you poor little darling," she exclaimed, "do not cry so, or I never shall forgive myself. But here is a rose from Charley, who feels as badly as you do. He asks your forgiveness in the humblest manner. Indeed, he almost pushed me down in his eagerness, as if I were of no consequence at all. He did not dream that you were hurt, for, Minny," and here she could not repress a girlish giggle, "he thought you were making fun of him."

Minny took the rose, with a very forgiving smile, notwithstanding her recent protestations of unending hostility, and Helen went away feeling quite sure that sleep would soon come now to refresh and strengthen her. She was confined to her room, however, for several days, during which Charles chafed and fretted, and scarcely tried to hide his impatience for her re appearance.

"Charley, what is the matter?" Helen asked one day; "I believe you are in love at last—but who can it be? I should suspect our patient up stairs, only you will have nothing to do with proud women; it must be a sweet, frank, im—"

"Stop, Helen, stop—don't repeat my nonsense."

"But, tell me now, cousin, *is* it Minny?"

"Yes it is," he replied, seriously; "but I have not the slightest idea whether she cares for me or not. I have a great mind to resort to stratagem."

"Don't, don't, Charley," interrupted Helen quickly."

"Why not, Helen?" he asked, looking up in some surprise.

"Oh, because, because— Make her a good, honest, manly offer, and she will respect you a great deal more."

"But she may refuse me, Helen—and I could not endure—"

"There she comes; now do as I tell you."

And she ran out of one door, as Minny entered the other. It was hard to tell which was the most embarrassed of the two—but as Minny's steps seemed very uncertain, (owing to her lameness, of course,) Charles put his arm around her, and for the next ten minutes, he hardly knew what he said or did, until Minny smiling up at him through her tears, whispered—

"Now indeed, I *am* proud." Then, with many blushes, she told him all about his cousin's little plot, fearing greatly that he would be disgusted; but he only laughed, and said it had ended very happily.

What is said About Us.

It is a much greater kindness to tell us the good things that are said about us than the bad ones. Somebody remarks that when a man prefaces what he is about to say to you by telling you that "it is something you ought to know," the safest course is to knock him down at once, unless he is too big, because you are sure to want to after he has got through speaking. It is a conundrum why we "ought to know" bad things said of us instead of the good—why we should be vexed instead of pleased—disheartened instead of strengthened. The true friend is the one who helps us to see ourselves at our best, and so encourages us to live up to our highest possibilities. Constant fault-finding is as fatal to the growth of moral or social graces as frosts are to flowers, or thunder-showers to butterflies. We lose our interest when we are told continually of our failures; but to hear of our success is so pleasant that, hearing, we resolve to succeed forever. To form a habit of speaking of the pleasant rather than the unpleasant things of life would be an education for friendship.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

POPULAR LECTURES ON SCIENTIFIC SUBJECTS. By H. HELMHOLTZ, Prof. of Physics in the University of Berlin. Translated by E. ATKINSON, Prof. of Experimental Science, Staff College. With an Introduction by Prof. TYNDALL. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York: and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada.

BACHELDER'S ILLUSTRATED TOURIST'S GUIDE OF THE UNITED STATES. Popular Resorts, and how to reach them. Embellished by one hundred wood engravings. Including Gettysburg, what to see and how to see it. Published by J. B. Bachelder, Boston; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada. Price $2 00.

THE PAYSON, DUNTON AND SCRIBNER MANUAL OF PENMANSHIP. Published by Wentworth, Ainsworth & Co., New York: and for sale by J. A. Bancroft & Co., Phila.

WORK: A STORY OF EXPERIENCE. By LOUISA M. ALCOTT, author of "Little Women," &c. Miss Alcott's new novel is a plea for independence as preferable to a life of dependence. Work is wealth, and occupation is a surer promoter of health and happiness than money. Published by Roberts Brothers; and also for sale by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Phila. Price $1.75.

MARGARET MAITLAND. By MRS. OLIPHANT, author of "Zaidee," &c. Published by T. B Peterson & Bros. Price $1.75.

THE MAGAZINES. The June Magazines—Lippincott's Magazine, The Atlantic Monthly, Scribner's Monthly, and The Galaxy—are all full of interesting matter, essays, sketches, stories, &c. Their indefatigable publishers and editors leave but little to be desired in the way of magazine literature.

THE WESTMINSTER REVIEW for April has been issued by the Leonard Scott Publishing Company, New York.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE FOR THE YEAR 1871. We are indebted to the Hon. Leonard Myers for this volume, which is of such an interesting character that Congress ordered the printing of 255,000 extra copies of it. It would have pleased us very greatly to do the printing at a fair price—but very likely it pleased somebody else just as much, and so we suppose it is about as even as things are in the habit of coming out in this world. If each of these 355,000 copies should be carefully read, say by ten persons, then those 2,550,000 persons will derive an amount of instruction from this work which fully justifies all the cost of printing such a large number.

WIT AND WISDOM OF GEORGE ELIOT. Published by Roberts Brothers, Boston; and also for sale by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philada.

TWO BOYS SAVED; OR, ONLY A PLAIN WOMAN. By MARY DWINELL CHELLIS Approved by the Committee of Publication. Published by the Congregational Publishing Society, Beacon street, Boston. For sale by J. C. Garrigues & Co., Philada. Price $1 25.

LITTLE WAVIE THE FOUNDLING OF GLENDERY By CROSA TEMPLE, author of "Millicent's Home," &c. Published by Congregational Publishing Society, Boston. Price $1 00.

FAIRMOUNT PARK. Sketches of its Scenery, Waters and History. Published by Claxton Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada. Price 75 cents.

APPLETON'S RAILWAY AND STEAM NAVIGATION GUIDE for July, 1873. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York.

☞ There is a young Quaker lady in Philadelphia who is so conscientious that she won't take a kiss without returning it.

☞ Daniel O Connell, the Irish orator, was applied to by a friend for his autograph; to which he replied: "Sir, I never send autographs. Yours, DANIEL O CONNELL."

☞ A youth struck his horse with a gun to make him go. The horse, the gun and three fingers went off so quickly that nobody feels quite competent to say which started first.

☞ At the end of a well-known French *opera bouffe* a gentleman remarked to a lady next him that the opera was "long enough." "Yes," she replied, "and quite as broad as it is long."

☞ Booth, the well-known actor, had a broken nose. A lady once remarked to him, "I like your acting, Mr Booth; but, to be frank with you, I can't get over your nose." "No wonder, madam," replied he, "the bridge is gone."

☞ There is a good story told of Bishop Mazzorie. He was sitting next a navy captain, who said to him, "You have in your province two rival bishops, C—— and another fellow; which of them do you incline to?" "I am the other fellow," replied Mazzorie.

☞ One's domestic habits sometimes stand one in good need. A woman in Cleveland lately broke a burglar's head with a boot-jack, and put him to ignominious flight. Nothing but continued practice in her own family circle could have made her so efficient with the weapon.

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THE
SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, JULY 19, 1873.

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LETTERS FROM ZIG.

MISERABLE EXCUSES.

Something came under my notice last week which struck me so forcibly as an illustration of the American way of doing things that I must tell the Post about it.

When I was little, a young woman went to school where I did, who was noted for two characteristics—stupidness and sanctimoniousness. (I've seen those two qualities go together many a time.) She possessed the merest rudiments of a common-school education, not more than half as much as a bright public school-boy twelve years old of these days has. That was her stock of general education. Besides that, she studied for three months or thereabouts a work on anatomy for children, a book about as thick as your finger. And she never went to school any more in her life after that winter, but married shortly, and didn't do well. Her husband was lazy and "shiftless." I lost sight of the young woman entirely, until so many years passed that she was no longer a young woman, but a middle-aged woman, still stupid and sanctimonious as ever, purring about like a soft white cat, and now and then dropping a large tear or two, as she narrated her troubles to sympathizing strangers.

And what do you think this woman was doing when I stumbled across her path again?

I am ashamed to tell it; but this impostor of a female woman had set herself up for a lady doctor, and was actually practising medicine, going from house to house with her little bag of medicines, and dosing 'em out with as much sublime self-consciousness as if she had been Dunglison's Medical Dictionary on two legs. And she knowing no more about the anatomy and physiology of the human frame divine, than she knows about the inside of the moon! I never was so taken down in my life. If she'd been a man I wouldn't have cared, because a man can be a humbug and a blatherskite and nothing is thought of it. Nobody thinks of throwing into the teeth of the whole masculine gender that they must necessarily be all humbugs and blatherskites because one particular specimen of 'em is. No indeed! But let a woman be a humbug and a blatherskite, no matter how many good, intelligent, thorough women may be all around her, all the world points its fingers at her and says:—

"Here's one of your strong-minded women now! That's a specimen of what a woman amounts to when she undertakes to do anything."

And just now, when so many conscientious women are studying patiently and working desperately to make use of the few poor advantages in their power, and a skeptical community is watching with all its eyes to see how the experiment of ladies entering the medical profession will result, here comes this ignorant, stupid, brassy quack of a creature, dodging about with her little bag of medicines, and dosing folks and folks' babies with the air of a Solomon. It's a little too much, so it is. Of course she plays all manner of mischief with her indiscriminate fool-dosing, and when an innocent little baby dies and goes to Heaven under her care, *paterfamilias* solemnly affirms that if ever a woman-doctor comes into his house again, he'll throw her down-stairs. I never hear of a woman like that, that I don't wish she was out in the middle of the Red Sea, with a good big heavy stone around her neck.

Such people wouldn't be possible anywhere but in America, where anybody may call himself a doctor and practice medicine without any diploma; a butcher may buy a drug store and go to putting up medicines for people himself; and where a man may go to Congress or be a mayor of a city with no other qualification than that he has money enough to buy himself into office. I know a woman who advertises to teach the German language, and make correct German scholars, when she can't speak three German words properly to save her life.

It does appear as though this sort of streak of sham and humbug runs through American work universally. In a city not far from here a large and handsome building, four stories high, was in process of erection, a little while ago. A contractor undertook to put up the work in a hurry, just as is done with all buildings now-a-days, and behold, before the walls were finished, so fragile and horribly insecure were they that they tumbled down one day and killed a half-dozen people—wouldn't stand till they were finished. And the other day an iron bridge over Rock River, some more cheap, quick, contract work, tumbled into the river and drowned about a hundred people. If it had only been a hundred American bridge and house builders who were drowned, there wouldn't have been anything to regret. On the contrary, it would have been an occasion for national rejoicing. Railroads and steamboats are built on the same plan, cheap and quick. Nobody in America builds for the ages. The work done in every department of industry is cheap and quick, an excuse for an excuse. American people have plenty of pluck, but no plod. And without plodding, painstaking, patience and waiting, nothing good or worthy was ever accomplished in this world, or ever will be.

ZIG.

THE OLD STILE.

BY SAPPHO.

There's a stile at the foot of the meadow,
A place I shall never forget,
For 'twas there when the sun was just setting,
That Nellie and I often met.

Ever cool and deep shaded that spot was,
And the noble old oak that stood nigh
Has many times witnessed our meeting,
And heard our soft spoken good-bye.

How well I remember sweet Nellie,
Her blue eyes and so t golden hair,
With her hat on the stile close beside her,
As she'd sit and wait for me there.

But death ever calls for the fairest,
And 'tis years since they laid her to rest,
And to-day she sleeps under the oak tree,
The spot which in life she loved best.

And oft to that spot do I wander,
And dream of the joys I have lost,
But I know that again I shall meet her,
When the "River of Death" I'll have crossed.

For I know that she's now with the angels
That inhabit that heavenly shore;
Though on earth she is lost to me ever,
Yet in Heaven I'll claim her once more.

LETTER FROM NEW YORK.

DEAR POST—By the time this letter reaches you the thermometer may stand 100 in the shade, and I hope it will. Not that I want any one to get into a sweat over it, or that I am much in favor of broils or stews; but I don't like *cold* weather in July, and that's what's the matter with me just now. I went out for a promenade and to do a little shopping yesterday, and between you and I, I like to have frozen to death. I didn't have any muff—unless you count the young gentleman with eyeglasses who escorted me—and in truth I wasn't bundled up very much for January, but so far as they went, I wore my winter clothes. In the teeth of all that, however, I was cold, and blue, and shivery and if some one had come along and offered me a set of sables I should have had no hesitation in accepting them, and that, understand, when India muslins and grenadines and ganzes are lying around loose waiting to be worn. The weather this season reminds me of the fellow who attempted to live in Northern Wisconsin: "He did'nt like it up thar. It was winter nine months of the year, and awful late in the fall all the rest of the time."

I don't know how things are with you, but here in New York we have only had about three days of "sun-stroke" weather, and that is being treated with an undeserved and an unbecoming coolness; and if "Old Probabilities" down there in Washington don't give us weather a little more seasonable, I shall be tempted to join the woman's rights' movement and turn my influence (when we are sufficiently advanced to possess some) toward having the present incumbent removed, and somebody else appointed in his place. Why I went down to Trinity churchyard the other day—not that it was a cheerful place to visit, or a fashionable, or in fact that it had any particular interest attached to it any way for the unthinking. I went in there just as I go into a thousand places—because the gate was open. I did not expect to be much interested, but when I found I was the only living creature in all that silent city, I began to have feelings something after the "I'm monarch of all I survey" order, and for two mortal hours I wandered about, shivering in the cold winds that should have been autumnal, reading the inscriptions on the crumbling head-stones, listening to the chimes and moralizing, and having, altogether, a real miserable season.

I said I moralized, and so I did, and I speculated somewhat as well, and it was all on the sin of stealing. I learned in a primer when a very little girl that "it is a sin to steal a pin," and in later years I have heard of people mean enough to rob a graveyard, and I suppose likely it was the recollection of these things that deterred me, for I was sorely tempted. I wanted to belong to the ring. I tried to imagine myself a Tweed or a Garvey, but I couldn't; for I did not want to appropriate everything to myself. I only wanted to distribute things more evenly. I wanted to take from those graves where loving hands had planted flowers in rich and rare profusion, just one little blossoming shrub or a slip of cypress and transfer it to the graves of the forgotten dead. There are many of them there, those too who have died in all the sweetness and beauty of youth, the once fair marble crumbling to decay, their graves trodden down and destroyed. Upon many of them the name is entirely obliterated, and one can only decipher the year, which in many instances dates as far back as 1681.

Charlotte Temple, the young unfortunate creature whose sad fate has been woven into song, and the story of whose life is familiar to every one, lies near the roar and bustle and confusion of Broadway. One plain marble slab marks her resting-place, while upon it are simply engraven the words CHARLOTTE TEMPLE. No date of birth or death, nothing but the simple name. She died, alone among strangers; no loving hand to smooth her pillow; no sympathetic ear to listen to the sad recital of her sorrows. For years the grave was unmarked save by a simple board upon which her name appeared; but at last, and only a little time ago, some one out of pure philanthropy contributed the stone that now marks an otherwise unknown grave. At first the stone bore not only the name but an appropriate and affecting epitaph; but one winter night some one entered the churchyard and cut away all save the name. There is a deep hollow in the stone where the inscription was destroyed, and laying as it does flat upon the grave it is always filled with the water which gathers there from frequent rains; and the other day as I passed bevies of bright plumed songsters fluttered about, hopping from side to side, laving their light wings and disporting themselves in careless freedom. I turned away and left her there alone with the birds, whose plaintive song is the only requiem ever wailed above the loved and lost, the young, the sinning, the unhappy Charlotte Temple.

But enough of graveyards—I've talked about them now until I feel like a funeral procession. I will add, however, that I did not take any flowers from the graves of the remembered dead to place upon the graves of the *un*-remembered; because I did not know exactly how the law would understand a transaction of that kind in case I was caught at it. My conscience would have held me guiltless—but Judge Hackett and the rest of them are getting so severe with delinquents, that one naturally pauses and reads up before committing any depredations, more especially if they have made up their minds to stay in the city, and don't care to spend the summer up the Hudson.

Fashions, (i. e.) *new* fashions, do not burst upon us with such frequency as to take our breath away—but for all that little new ideas crop out now and then, just as they have in the matter of carrying umbrellas. A few weeks ago, a lady could not appear on the street without an umbrella fastened to her belt, sword-fashion. That is all changed now, and umbrellas are tucked under the arm and carried "Paul Pry" style. It isn't a particularly graceful fashion, but it shows one to be "up" in modern ideas, and that is about all that is necessary. In fashions for gentlemen I am not posted, and don't pretend to be. I never could tell what they wore or how they wore it—but I've been taking notice lately, and I find that ninety-nine out of every hundred, wear a rose in the buttonhole on the left lapel of the coat, and the rest wear a pink. And I have discovered, too, that they have an ingenious little arrangement in the way of a bouquet-holder that is filled with water and concealed under the said lapel, and which is very effective in keeping the bouquet fresh and nice. It seems like going to a great deal of trouble just for the sake of the ornamental—but there is no estimating what a gentleman will do, for looks.

The races, just over at Jerome Park, I did not attend, but I am informed that the concourse of ladies was somewhat astonishing—and that the betting was quite as lively among them as among the other sex, though not always characterized by quite as great a display of judgment. If it was Pete's, or Dick's, or Charley's horse, up went the money, and would have done so, even if entered against Dexter, Startle, or Goldsmith Maid. There may be no harm in ladies attending races, it may be a pleasant and harmless mode of pastime, and betting may be no worse in them than in the other sex—but it seems to me the elegant costumes, the show, the glitter and the excitement are all in question able taste, and indicate a rather unladylike rapidity. But it is an imported fashion, and will have its day, I suppose, in spite of all you, or I, or any one can say, so we may as well make up our minds to put up with it, and go ourselves next time and see what it is all like.

OLIVE KING.

HOME AND SOCIETY.

THE FINE-ART OF EATING.

There are many persons in our land, and perhaps we may number some of them amongst our readers, who seem to believe that provided the human frame has enough food wherewith to satisfy the cravings of nature, there is little need to be paid to the manner in which it is served.

They will tell you that if they can only procure food enough for themselves and their families, they care not whether it be served on wooden trenchers or silver platters; or whether the table be covered with fine linen or oil-cloth. And if they truly think so, why it will do them no good to read this article, for they will scorn all ideas of dietetic refinements, and will regard the etiquette of the table as a bore, or as a frivolous affectation by which the rich endeavor to lift themselves above the common folk.

There are a small class of wealthy persons in the United States who possess the time and means to cultivate the elegancies of life, but their riches need not give them such decided advantages over the much larger class of persons who possess but small means, and need not prevent this class from understanding the fine art of eating quite as well as they do; even if fewer servants are employed, and less silver-plate, glass and china, and rich damask table-linen are used to adorn and beautify their tables, and far less luxurious viands are daily served,

"Wi' sauce, ragouts an' sic like trashtrie,"
That's little short o' downright wastrie."

It costs no more money to have our tables well served than the reverse. A little more laundry-work may be required when we insist upon our tablecloths being spotless, and our napkins frequently changed, but in large families of children the handsome buff, and red and white, or pink and white tablecloths can be substituted for snowy white ones, and a cloth dipped in warm water will by dint of a little rubbing efface many a spot upon them, and keep the cloth sweet and fresh. In the same way colored napkins can be used for the children, and they will not soil so very quickly as those commonly in use.

All that is worth borrowing from the table etiquette of the rich and the fashionable can be adopted at our own tables with but little additional expenditure of time or money; and we can set our tables as expeditiously if we place the dishes on a line or opposite each other, as we can to throw them on without a thought given to the symmetry of position.

It costs no more to teach our servants to hand a dish to the left-hand than to the right, while it does make a great deal of difference in our comfort in helping ourselves. So also in turning out a glassful of water; if it is done at the left-hand, the servant can attend to it with greater ease.

It may take up a little more time to have the dinner-dishes all removed, the tablecloth brushed free from crumbs and *debris*, and the dessert served in an unexceptional manner; but if you consume this time in agreeable conversation, you will find it well spent, and very likely the best possible medicine you could employ to relieve you from dyspepsia.

Make a practice of remembering some amusing event that has transpired since breakfast time, and treasure it up for the family regalement while the dishes are being removed, or call upon each child in turn to relate some little event, etc., which will entertain the whole party. We would not advise you to set before your family a dish of gossip upon which they can gloat, nor would we permit children to relate events concerning their schoolmates which were prejudicial to their characters and habits; but we do believe in a pleasing interchange of thoughts, ideas and events, to be mingled with every family repast.

We need to lengthen out the time employed in eating, to learn to eat more slowly. It is said that more than one-half of our people dig their graves with their teeth, and we fully believe the statement.

Now we were never intended to be mere guzzlers of food, and although we must eat to live, we need not, in common with the brutes, live to eat.

We should learn to temper the grossness of our appetites with the refinements of art; should introduce cheerful interludes of social talk with our daily meals.

The mother may not be able to bring about a reform in these matters unless the father will assist her, but with the co-operation of both, the family meals can be speedily transformed into charming repasts, and the time spent in them become the most enjoyable of the whole twenty-four hours.

But if parents will come to the table, fatigued in body and mind, worn out, depressed and disheartened, their faces fully proclaiming the extent of their troubles; and their unkind words marring the pleasure of all present; they need not hope to obtain much benefit from their food, nor to contribute *one iota* to their own or their children's happiness.

The demeanor at the table is a sure evidence of good-breeding, and betokens the lady or gentleman; and the behavior of children there fully exemplifies the character of their home training.

Pleasing manners and a cheerful courtesy belong especially to the fine-art of eating, and are not only a means of happiness; but are a most desirable hygienic habit. We should also pay a due attention to the elegancies of the table, and to the decencies of feeding because a well-served table is productive of appetite.

One enjoys a tastefully presented meal ten times more than one that is served helter-skelter, without any due observances of table etiquette; and this is a matter of great importance when we are ill: for even medicine can be taken with better *gout* out of a handsomely cut glass than from a pewter spoon or a tin cup; and morsels of food placed upon nicely browned toast and garnished with the feathery green of parsley are much more relished than when served without any regard to comeliness. There is no doubt but what we must all eat if we would live; so let us cultivate it as an art, even while we are forced to confess with Peter Pinder that,

"Venison's a Caesar in the fiercest fray;
Turtle I an Alexander in its way;
And then in quarrels of a slighter nature,
Mutton's a most successful mediator!
So much superior is the stomach's smart,
To all the vaunted horrors of the heart;
E'en love, who often triumphs in his grief,
Hath ceased to feed on sighs, to pant on beef."

DAISY EYEBRIGHT.

THE HUMAN FOOT.

Poets in every time have lavished praises on the "human foot divine." Homer calls Thetis "the silver-footed queen."

Paris, in making choice of the many beautiful virgins brought before him—

"Their gait he marked as gracefully they moved,
And round their feet his eye sagacious roved."

Ben Jonson describes a lover whose devotion to his mistress was so great that he

—— "would adore the shoe,
And slipper were left off, would kiss it too."

And again—

"And where she went the flowers took thickest root,
As she had sowed them with her odorous foot."

The following sentiment is from an old volume of anonymous poems—

"How her feet tempt; how soft and light she treads,
Fearing to wake the flowers from their beds;
Yet from their sweet green pillows everywhere
They start and gaze about to see my fair.

Look how that pretty, modest columbine
Hangs down its head to view those feet of thine!
See the fond motion of the strawberries,
Creeping on earth to go along with thee;
The lovely violet makes after, too,
Unwilling yet, my dear, to part with you.
The knot grass and the daisies eaten thy toes,
To kiss my fair one's feet before she goes."
"Do not fear to put thy feet naked in the river, sweet,
Think not newt, nor leech, nor toade,
Will bite the foot where thou hast trode."

—*Wilson's Cheerful Ayers.*

Herrick pays the following delicate compliment to MRS. Southwood—

"Her pretty feet,
Like smiles, did creep
A little out, and then,
As if they started at bo-peep,
Did soon draw in again."

The following is also very beautiful, from Sir John Suckling's "Ballad of the Wedding"—

"Her feet beneath her petticoat
Like little mice stole in and out,
As if they feared the light;
But, O, she dances such a way,
No sun upon an Easter Day
Is half so fine a sight."

THE TOLLING OF A BELL.

BY DAISY BURNS.

I hear the tolling of a far-off bell. What a sad feeling creeps over one when that sound so mournful and sad wails through the air. It brings tidings that some one is gone; a spirit has crossed the river; yes, methinks I see the angels now gathering at the "beautiful river." They came to meet him, and now he is over. He will be mourned for a time, but the things of life will creep in, and after awhile he is forgotten.

And it will be the same way with us all. We will, after awhile, be mourned and missed for a time. The world can't die because we do. The grass must grow as green, the flowers breathe as fresh perfume, when we are gone as now; our friends will be gay again, and things will be as if we had never been. Each of us is but as a tiny grain of sand in a mighty sand-bank; one little grain slips out at a time and is not missed. Yet we would have our memory stay as fresh and green in the mighty bank as the grass above our graves.

OUR OWN.

If I had known in the morning
How wearily all the day
The words unkind
Would trouble my mind
I said when you went away,
I had been more careful, darling,
Nor given you needless pain;
But we vex "our own"
With look and tone
We might never take back again.

For thoughts in the quiet evening
You may give me the kiss of peace,
Yet it might be
That never for me
The pain of the heart should cease.
How many go forth in the morning
That never come home at night;
And hearts have broken
For harsh words spoken,
That sorrow can never set right.

We have careful thoughts for the stranger,
And smiles for the casual guest;
But oft for "our own"
The bitter tone,
Though we love "our own" the best.
Ah! lips with the curve impatient;
Ah brow with that look of scorn;
'Twere a cruel fate,
Were the night too late
To undo the work of morn.

Biographical Sketches

CLEOPATRA.

BY MAURICE F. EGAN.

To-day the name of Egypt brings to our minds a vision of toiling fellahs, narrow strips of fertile Nile mud, and sandy plains, unshadowed save by the giant forms of the time-defying pyramids. About nineteen hundred years ago, Egypt was the garden city of the East. Although the legions of Rome were even then threatening her independence, she had not yet became a province of the so-called Mistress of the World. Her cities were abodes of luxurious splendor unequalled by Rome itself; the terrific mysteries of her worship of Isis and Osiris, were magnificently celebrated by priests more powerful than kings; the great Nile and her lotus-wreathed canals bore to her feet the choicest products of all nations.

Egypt was still rich and powerful when Ptolemy Dionysius ascended the throne. Among the Egyptians it was the custom to permit the marriage of brother and sister, and hence the queen of the reigning monarch was generally his sister. Ptolemy Dionysius came to the throne at the early age of thirteen, and divided the regal sway with Cleopatra, his sister; but this princess was ambitious; she aspired to exercise undivided sovereignty, and through the influence of the eunuch Photemis, she was obliged to fly to Syria. About this time Julius Cæsar had gained his great victory over Pompey, and had entered Egypt in pursuit of his retreating rival. When he reached Alexandria he was met by the news of Pompey's assassination. Cæsar and his legions bore themselves with the air of conquerors in Alexandria, and remained some time in that city.

Cleopatra sent to him, imploring him to intervene in her favor. He answered by a trusty messenger, telling her to return at once. Accompanied by a friend, the princess entered a small boat in the dusk of the evening, and succeeded in safely reaching the gate of the palace; but here arose the chief difficulty. How could she pass the guards without being discovered? She was, however, equal to the occasion. She bade Apollodorus, her attendant, tie her up in a carpet, to resemble a bale of goods. Thus disguised, she was carried to Cæsar.

"This stratagem of hers," says Plutarch, "which was a strong proof of her wit and ingenuity, is said to have first opened to her the way to Cæsar's heart." Cæsar attempted at first to reconcile her to the king; but this reconciliation did not last long. A war broke out, and Cæsar, throwing his arms into the scale, decided the contest in favor of Cleopatra. Ptolemy was slain, and Cleopatra became sole ruler of Egypt, and of the heart of the all-conquering Cæsar.

The secret of the power of fascination that this Egyptian enchantress exercised over all who approached her, lay not altogether in her beauty, which was "neither astonishing nor inimitable," but in the peculiar charm of her manner, her wonderful tact, and the brilliancy of her conversation. "Her voice was delightfully melodious, and had the same variety of modulations as an instrument of many strings. She spoke most languages; and there were but few of the foreign ambassadors whom she answered by an interpreter. She gave audiences herself to the Ethiopians, Troglodites, Hebrews, Arabs, Syrians, Medes, and Parthians."

She had been educated amid the horrible corruption of the royal palace; and young as she was, she gained such ascendancy over Cæsar as to cause him to brave the wrath of the Senate and people of Rome rather than leave the object of his guilty passion. His legal wife, Calpurnia, deeply felt the wrong inflicted on her by his unconcealed preference for another. He contemplated having the laws of Rome altered, in order that he might be allowed two wives.

After Cæsar's assassination in the senate-house, Mark Antony, Octavius (Cæsar's heir and his niece's son), and Lepidus, formed the second Triumvirate. These three entered into a most execrable compact. They each agreed to sunder the holiest ties, that the vengeance of the others might be gratified. Antony surrendered his uncle Lucius to death; Lepidus his brother Paulus; and Octavius, forgetting gratitude, gave up his friend, the venerable Cicero, as a sacrifice to the hatred of Antony. Brutus and Cassius, resolving to oppose the new Triumvirate and to establish the Commonwealth, retired to Thrace. Antony and Octavius followed them with a large army. At the battle of Philippi the empire of the world was decided by the defeat of the conspirators, and the Triumviri reigned in triumph.

Mark Antony was the leading spirit of this powerful three. He was as noted for his profligacy as for his military talents. In appearance he was handsome and manly; he dressed in imitation of Hercules, from whom he claimed to be descended; by his lavish magnificence and off-hand manner he had made himself the idol of the army.

While on his expedition against the Parthians, he sent a message to the Queen of Egypt, inviting her to meet him in Cilicia, that she might answer the charge of having aided Cassius in the late war with the Triumvirate. Confident in the power of her beauty and fascinating manner, Cleopatra obeyed the summons. She had conquered Pompey and Cæsar in her youth, and now that time had matured her charms, she did not doubt that Antony would also become her slave. Assuming the emblems of Venus, the queen of beauty, and grouping around her the loveliest maidens, dressed as Graces and Nereids, she entered a galley, and slowly sailed in barbaric splendor along the river Cydnus. The stern of her vessel glittered with gold, the sails were of purple, the oars, which moved to the sound of music, were silver, and as the galley floated between the crowded banks of the river, clouds of fragrant incense were wafted to the shore.

The Roman general at once became her captive. In her company he forgot glory, honor, his country—everything but her. Each day they gave alternate entertainments of almost incredible magnificence. While Antony gave himself up to pleasure, his wife Fulvia was at Rome, defending his interests against Octavius Cæsar. She was at last forced to leave Rome. She wrote several moving letters to Antony, which caused him to awaken from his infatuation and turn his forces toward Italy. Full of jealousy and outraged pride, Fulvia started to meet him, but died on the way. Antony then married Octavius's sister, Octavia. Afterward Antony returned to Cleopatra; but Octavia was less violent in temper and more dignified than Fulvia, and the ill-treatment she received from her husband served only to show her character in a noble light. In her the Egyptian enchantress had a formidable rival, for she was younger and more beautiful than Cleopatra. Octavius and the people of Rome were justly incensed by Antony's shameless conduct, and a civil war ensued. While Octavius gained strength and marched to sure victory, Antony and Cleopatra feasted luxuriously at Alexandria. They had formerly founded a society called The Inimitable Livers; they now formed another—The Companions of Death—the members of which devoted themselves entirely to enjoyment. The inexorable Cæsar marched on; and Cleopatra experimented with poisons and venomous serpents, seeking for an easy and sudden death. Cæsar came nearer; Antony went forth to meet him with his fleet. His soldiers and mariners joined the enemy. In despair, Antony cried out that Cleopatra had betrayed him, and retreated to the city. The queen was informed of this, and, fearing his anger, she fled to a monument in which her treasures were stored. She bolted herself in, and sent word to Antony that she was dead. He believed the news, and fell upon his sword. His body was given to Cleopatra, who buried it with her own hands.

The proud Queen of Egypt resolved never to grace the triumph of Octavius; she would not brook the thought of being led through Rome a captive. One night, after she had visited Antony's tomb, a peasant with a basket of figs presented himself at the gate of her residence. When the fruit was delivered to Cleopatra, she took an asp from amid the clustering leaves and applied it to her arm. Her attendants, Iras and Charmion, followed her example.

Later, when Cæsar's messenger broke into the monument, he found the queen in her royal robes lying dead upon her golden couch. Iras lay dead at her feet; while Charmion, dying, endeavored to arrange her mistress's diadem. At the time of her death, Cleopatra was thirty-nine years of age.

Plutarch.

The Last Sin.

I was once in a circle of thirteen or fourteen clergymen, engaged in theological discussion. The subject was the eternal subject of sin, its place in the system, its origin, and its cure. I said at last—to one of the truest men, and one of the purest moralists, now living—that we were beating round the bush; that it would be much better to speak from instances than in the abstract, to discuss sins than to discuss sin. "Tell us," said I, "what was the last sin you consciously committed." The whole assembly was hushed. My friend was not startled. He answered immediately, "I *will* tell you: I had it on my mind as I was speaking before. The last sin that I consciously committed was the sin of staying in bed this morning when I knew I ought to rise. Voluntarily I did what at the moment I knew was wrong." The confession was received with a shout of amusement and of sympathy. And every man of the circle acknowledged that that very sin of laziness—the appetite for a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep—was the special temptation, or sin, which had pointed his language in the whole discussion.—*Old and New.*

[Yes, and the most amusing part of the above is, that the alleged sin to which all the above ministers pleaded guilty, in all probability was no sin at all. In nine cases out of ten, the desire to lie in bed in the morning, is simply Nature's assertion that both mind and body need less work and more rest—and the sin more often lies in the getting up, in opposition to Nature's advice, than in the lying still in obedience to it. For thus do ministers and other ascetics commit gradual suicide.—*Kit. Nat. Eve. Post.*]

A Cornered Legislator.

A gentleman who occupies a seat in the upper branch of the New York Legislature, but at the time was a member of the Assembly, relates the following:

"Perkins was as honest a man as ever set foot in Albany. Money wouldn't buy him, and I knew it, but I thought I would have a little fun with him, so I went down to his room one evening and said,

"'Perkins, what do you think of that underground-railroad bill? Are you going to vote for it?'

"'Well,' said Perkins, 'I haven't made up my mind yet, exactly. I am inclined to think it is a good bill; but why do you ask?'

"'I thought you were in favor of it," said I, "and as long as you have concluded to vote for it, I just wanted to say to you that the men interested in it are paying five hundred dollars for votes, and as it is coming up on its final passage to-morrow, you can just as well have the money as not; you'll vote for the bill anyway."

"'Vote for the bill! I'll be hanged first,' cried the irate Perkins. 'No, sir. If improper means are being taken to pass this thing as you say, I, for one, will vote against it every time. You can put me down 'no.'

"'Oh, I don't care anything about the bill," said I. "I was only trying to do you a favor, and I think I can yet, for, to tell the truth, the rival companies are here in full force, and are moving heaven and earth to defeat it. They are paying the same amount for 'noes,' and as long as you are bound to vote that way, I'll get you the five hundred dollars all the same."

"'Can such things be?' exclaimed Perkins, rising from his seat and tearing up and down the room in a whirlwind of righteous wrath and virtuous indignation. 'What a state of things this is! A plague on both of your houses, I won't vote at all!'

"All right," said I, "I'll get you the five hundred dollars for being absent."

And as the jolly senator brought to mind the horror of perplexity in which this last proposition involved old Perkins, he roared with laughter.

"TILL DEATH."

Upon her upturned face the moonlight streams;
Love's written message flutters from her hands;
Within her happy eyes the light still gleams
From words that only love quite understands.
"Thine own till death," he sighs; "till death my own!"
And love's securest rapture thrills her tone.

Each word upon her ear in music falls,
As when some heavenly aria is sung;
The melody alone our soul enthralls,
The words they speak to us in foreign tongue.
Till death! till death! Love never spake till now,
Or breathed in sweeter words a stronger vow.

* * * * * * *

A few short years, and by the waning light
Of a September's rainy afternoon,
She wearily sits beneath the chilling blight
That fell upon her happy life so soon.
Her looks are bent in longing, yet in dread,
Upon the faded letter that she holds,
While tears like rain fall on the earthly head
That hides its guile amid her sable folds.

"O Love, thou knowest not time! She reads, and lo!
The years departed open like a scroll;
The old-time flush creeps o'er her cheek of snow;
Love's flame relights the windows of her soul.
She nears the end, and with one heart-wrung cry,
The last of hope, the first of long despair,
"Till death!" she sobs; "O God, since he could die,
The world's a grave, and hope lies buried there!"

* * * * * * *

O Love! O Death! forever at it at strife!
O stricken ones! who afore can ye not hear
What omnip esent, all-pervading Life
Still seeks to whisper in your earth-dulled ear:
"There is no death! All life forever abides!
The shadow ye so dread and trembling see,
Is but the veil that me cifully hides
The glory of my immortality."

THE MYSTERY
OF
TRENDLEDEEP MANOR.

BY PERCY B. ST. JOHN.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A PITIFUL MEETING.

When Lucy fled, maddened by the thought of the discovery she had made, she took with her her jewels, a writing-desk, and one thousand pounds in notes and gold—no more. Of all the wealth which had descended on her head like a curse, this was every penny she secured.

She had fully made up her mind never to return—never to see home or husband again—under any circumstances that could arise. She would hide herself where none would ever find her, change her name, live by her own exertions, and allow him freedom complete and irrevocable.

He had married her for her money—he had owned it himself; and in his cups—to which he had resorted as a mediator between himself and sorrow—he had wished her dead.

But now the first thought of her life must be security, and for this purpose she must travel far and quickly. In her whole plans she was governed by a kind of instinctive shrewdness, which in her state of mind appeared method in madness. She went direct to London, where she purchased clothes suitable to a moderate station in life, but all mourning.

Lucy determined to play the part of a young widow.

The seaport town of Undercliff is rather a watering-place than a place of business, though it is visited by a few colliers and coasters; but is certainly the dullest and most uninteresting place in the island of Great Britain, except in the season, when a large portion of the population filtering down to the shore make it an abode of liveliness for a month or two.

The native population principally consisted of fishermen, who worked at times, while their wives invariably let lodgings, and thus contrived to eke out a very tolerable existence.

The better part of the village, or town as some called it, faced the sea, from which they were only separated by a few scraps of green, on which collected the visitors, and at times the children of the residents.

In front of one of these rural spots was a house of more pretensions to gentility than any in Undercliff. There was a garden back and front, and trees and seats in the garden, which made it a pleasant place in summer.

It was called a boarding-house, and was kept by a worthy woman named Procter; who, left a widow with a son and daughter, had contrived to educate them tolerably well out of her small earnings—small, because only lasting for a short season.

To this place, some time after the departure of Lucy from the manor, came a young widow lady, attended by a neat London girl, who manifested a desire to stay some months. Her name was Scott, and she was now alone in the world, she said. As her luggage was ample, and she paid freely, Mrs. Procter—as is usual in lodging-houses—made no difficulty; and Mrs. Scott was provided with two bed-rooms and a sitting-room.

From the day of her entrance her life was perfectly monotonous. She rose early, took a short walk, returned to breakfast, and then practised on a piano sent from London for some hours. She then dined, and sat reading until tea-time, when she would again go forth with her maid for a stroll, warmly wrapped up, despite the season, and her face completely hidden by a veil.

She made no acquaintances, and never, under any pretence, spoke to strangers. As, however, the population of Undercliff was continually changing this caused no great remark.

Her favorite walks were by the sea-side, where the cliffs were rudest, and the pathways little frequented. In any secluded nook she would conceal herself, leaving her maid to wander at will, while she gazed out upon the sea waves, that came pouring in to break at her feet, or sometimes reading a book which she always carried with her.

At such times she would remove her veil, and enjoy, with a sense of physical satisfaction, the odor of the breeze.

One day Mrs. Scott was seated under the shadow of a rock, her parasol lay unheeded on the ground, while a book was on her knees. It was more than usually interesting in all probability, for she was so intent upon it that two young people approached her very close before she saw them.

She raised her eyes at last, and saw a young girl about ten and a lad about twelve—the one dark, the other fair, but both very handsome. The lad was tall and thin, with a boarding-school look about him that was unmistakable, while the girl, though walking shyly by him, was evidently one not much used to restraint. They were simply but well dressed, and spoke frankly and merrily.

At this moment Mrs. Scott detected behind them a gentleman rather darker than most Englishmen, who was gazing on her intently.

She dropped her veil and resumed her book.

Then, after some words from the gentleman, the young people passed on, and were soon out of sight.

"Pardon me, lady," then said the stranger, "if I speak to you. How is this? Why are you absent from the bedside of your sick husband?"

"Merciful heavens!" she cried, seated like a stone statue, "how can you, sir, torture me thus? Do you not see that I am a forlorn, helpless widow?"

"A widow, because you will it. Lady, I am your friend, the friend of your race; you must have no secrets from me. I know you; but why you are here I know not. I have heard, however, that *he* is ill, dangerously ill."

"Say no more. If you will give me your arm I will return to my home. Do not speak now," she said, in a low tone.

He offered his arm, which she took, and in silence they walked in the direction of the boarding-house, where the gentleman had taken apartments for his nephew and daughter under the name of John Haldane. He, too, had been attracted by the comfort and tasteful appearance of the residence.

An hour later Mrs. Scott received him in her rooms over a cup of tea. They admitted to the landlady being old acquaintances, though meeting by accident; and thus were left alone, without remark or comment.

"I suppose you have recognized me?" said the gentleman, fixing his dark eyes keenly on her.

"You are Balthazar, the gypsy."

"I was once; but I have abandoned the tribe forever with the death of the reasons which made me join it. My name is John Haldane. The reason for my joining them has ceased to exist; and, now, Mrs. Mordaunt, why are you here away from your husband, rumored in the papers to be dying from the desertion of his wife?'

"Mr. Haldane," said the *soi disant* widow, in a firm, stern voice, "I will never return to him. He it was who drove me away. We have parted forever."

"There has been some fearful misunderstanding. No man ever loved his wife more truly and devotedly than Hubert Treherne."

"You appear to be my friend, you assume a right to counsel me," she began.

"Every right."

"I will tell you all, then, on one condition. On your honor as a man, on your faith as a Christian, you will do nothing without my consent."

"I will do nothing. Tell me all, and I will advise you truly and honestly," he replied.

Lucy told him all, without hesitation,—everything, to the most minute detail.

Balthazar smiled gently.

"My poor child, you are laboring under an hallucination, which, however, I may not explain. Your husband is the most faithful, attached, and un-money-loving of men. If I can prove this, will you return?"

"Can I disbelieve my hearing—my senses?" she cried.

"Yes, everything but that he is false. But listen to me—on my salvation I will not betray you. But I will leave Arundell and Eleanor in your care, go down to Trendledeep, and there learn the truth. Unless I am able to prove to you your husband's entire innocence of all you believe, I will return alone.

"Return alone anyway," said Lucy, musing. "You have been my friend once before, and therefore I will not deny you now; but nothing can convince me against what I saw and heard."

"What we think we see and hear is often folly," replied Balthazar, or Mr. Haldane rather. "I will go."

And next day he took his departure, after leaving Walter Arundell and Eleanor Haldane under her charge. The youth and the young girl very readily accepted her guardianship, and soon became great friends with the pale, silent woman.

Mr. Haldane was away ten days, and then he came back, pale, thoughtful, and much worn.

"Well?" she said.

"You cannot return to Trendledeep—no, you are quite right; and more, guard jealously from any who may convey the news thither that you are in existence. I can explain no more."

And he changed the subject as being a painful one.

Lucy sighed, but not with disappointment. She had formed her own opinion as to the result of his journey, and she expected nothing more.

And now approached the hour when an heir might be expected to the house of Mordaunt. Balthazar quietly intimated his intention to remain at Undercliff until all was over.

At the end of a month the child came, a sturdy baby girl, born among strangers, doomed, it appeared, to a life of obscurity and trial.

Mrs. Scott was forced to trust much to Haldane in all things. He had the child registered in its real name, further affixing under its right arm a mark, that of a strawberry, with some indelible gypsy dye.

At the end of a month Mrs. Scott was up and about again, and then John Haldane, after giving her a safe address, went away, leaving the supposed widow alone with her child and maid.

She became now moody and sad. Her health at once caused her great anxiety, and hence a nurse was installed in the house.

And so it went on, until the child was six months old, by which time Mrs. Procter and her daughter, Jessie, had become fond both of mother and child. Mrs. Scott spoke of going to London.

"I cannot bear to part with the dear child," cried the mistress of the house.

"You need not. The child is better here than in London," said Mrs. Scott, after some few minutes of reflection. "You can take care of it until I return."

This proposition caused great delight; and when at last Mrs. Procter consented to accept a moderate stipend for the child, the matter was considered as settled.

It would be erroneous to believe that Lucy was wanting in affection for the babe when she thus left it behind her; but the heavy blow her affection had received, and the uncertainty of her future, must be taken into consideration when we say that the leaving of the child in such a case was rather a satisfaction than otherwise to the young mother.

Her purpose was a fixed and settled one, which the presence of the babe might impede, and Lucy was not one of those who, having taken up a resolution, is very easily led to abandon it.

Her course was a clear and marked one, and she fully intended to carry it out.

As soon as her arrangements had been made, and six months paid in advance for the child and nurse, the young woman took her departure, to commence once more the weary pilgrimage of life, under circumstances which never, in her wildest dreams, had occurred to her.

One thing was certain. No man should ever again touch her heart, or move her obdurate bosom to one touch of warmth. True, she was a wife, and no matter what his faults, would be true to her old love; but even were she to be free, never again should one of his false and treacherous sex have the opportunity to wound her feelings or agonize her soul.

She had been married for her money by one who, to win her, had descended to hypocrisy—even to the hypocrisy of virtue.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE OLD SINGING MASTER.

The decision to which Mrs. Scott—the first of many *aliases* she was to be known by—had come, was to take to the stage as a profession. She knew her own talent, and had no fear of the result, but she was also well aware of the difficulties which stand in the way of the *débutante*. She had no mind to go hawking round her talent to the managers.

But she had every reason to believe that she had in her own head the certain plan by which to obviate all this.

On reaching London, she threw off her widow's weeds.

Mrs. Scott was one of those who would have looked elegant in the most simple of garbs; it may, therefore, be readily imagined what she was after passing under the hands of a fashionable milliner, and started for Paris in a first-class carriage, with a lady's-maid almost as finely habited as herself.

Mrs. Scott had no particular predilection for Paris. But the young and resolute woman had a motive. She had given up a fortune unexpectedly bestowed upon her; she would make one herself, she would win world-wide success, and place her child, the unknown and obscure heiress of Mordaunt, on a pedestal where all the world should worship her.

On their arrival in Paris, Madame Scott went to a first-rate hotel, secured excellent apartments, and then drove out to see the city. During her drive, she went to several spots familiar to her, and then halted at the end of a small, neat, but obscure street, off the Boulevard.

Here she alighted, tripped in her old girlish style across the pavement, and in the finest French asked the *concierge* if the Signor Rocca still resided there.

"Yes," said the French official, rather gruffly, "I wish he did not."

Mrs. Scott looked at the sullen peasant—these *concierges* are the most grovelling, abject money-lovers in existence—and slipped a five-franc piece into his greedy hands.

"Is my old friend ill?" she asked.

"Yes," replied the coarse-minded Cerberus, "of the worst illness—poverty."

Mrs. Scott said no more, but left the house; and regaining her carriage, returned to the hotel.

The message intimated that an English lady wanted to see the Signor Rocca on important musical business, and that he was to return in the carriage sent at once.

This done, Mrs. Scott ordered dinner for two, dressed herself and waited, watching a window until she saw the expected carriage pull up in the court-yard. Then she advanced to an open pianoforte, and accompanying herself, poured forth one of the richest floods of music which perhaps had ever been heard in that old house, even when it was the private hotel of a duke or marquis.

The invited guest stood in the door transfixed. He hurriedly put forth the attendant, closed the door, and waited with clasped hands.

Suddenly the player arose, and advanced toward him with both hands extended.

"Well, my dear master."

"*Ma Lucie*," cried the Italian, with all that indescribable fervor and feeling which Duprez used to put into those two words.

"Yes, my dear master, and returned to you just the same as she left you, a little older, and a little out of practice."

"And married! *mon dieu!* you are Madame Scott," said the *artiste*, with a sigh.

"Married, and yet not Madame Scott," replied Lucy, gently; "but explanations later. Let us now to dinner;" and she gave up his hand to go away and give orders.

The Signor Rocca, now about five-and-forty, and as white-headed and old-looking as a man of fifty-five or eight, was of the most manly form of Italian attractiveness. There were about him all the remains of beauty—not of that style which is peculiar to old age, but that of youth prematurely aged.

His face had all the remains of the sweetest male loveliness. His head was long, like a hawk's; his eyes were of the darkest blue, the eyebrows and long, disjoining eyelashes being very dark over them; the nose straight, and forward from the brows; the half-black mustache running with the curve of the upper lip. His hair was white, his form bowed.

The Signor Rocca was an Italian prince, with two characteristics which had led him to poverty—patriotism and love of art.

He had lived for several years an exile in Paris, unwilling to tread the soil of his ancestors while in poverty and obscurity; but, devoted to his country as he was, aspiring from his soul to see her free, his passion was music.

His costume was simple to a fault, but he never for one moment thought of that; and when he sat down to dinner with his beautiful pupil, did the honors of the table with stately dignity.

The dinner finished, coffee was brought, and the old friends were alone.

"And now, my Lucie, what can I do for you?" he said.

"My friend, my master, I come to place in your hands almost my life. You will be secret?"

"As the grave!"

"Well, my friend, you have often wished that I should select the opera as a profession. You say I am qualified for it?"

"Admirably qualified," he began.

"My friend," she interrupted, "I have no dearer wish than to adopt the stage—the operatic stage—as a profession; but, first, as if you were my father confessor, you must hear my story and judge. I will tell it plainly, simply, and truthfully, and then you shall decide; but do not interrupt me—the sooner my sad narrative is over the better."

Signor Rocca bowed, sipped his black coffee, and prepared to listen.

As he had promised, he did not interrupt, though what he heard surprised him to a degree that scarcely enabled him to keep silence.

"I will say nothing, my poor lamb. What do you want me to do?"

"To make a great singer of me—to enable me to win a fortune for my child," she replied.

"I will do it," he replied. "From this day, this hour, this moment, I am at your service—your master, your friend, your slave!"

Mrs. Scott poured him out another cup of coffee, handed him a cigarette, and then, reclining in an arm-chair, unfolded her plans—plans which rather alarmed the Italian, who, like most true patriots, was simple-minded, and honest to a fault.

But his faith in "*ma Lucie*" bore him through, and so, in the musical journals three weeks later, it was announced that the Signor and Signorina Rocca had left for Italy the signora having an engagement at the great theatre of La Scala.

CHAPTER XX.

IN THE GLOAMING.

Time, unfortunately for some of us, will never stand still; and so the little girl at Undercliff was two years of age before her mother saw her again. A bright, radiant, rosy child it was, with hair and eyes that sparkled in the sun, and gave clear evidence of a beauty oftener talked about than seen. Mrs. Procter, and her daughter Jessie, adored the baby girl; and though Mrs. Scott was profuse in her remittances and letters, still wondered she could keep away from such a darling.

And then to hear that the quiet, demure little widow was the famous Italian singer, and the Signorina Rocca, quite bewildered these good and simple people.

Hester Adela Lucy Mordaunt—so the thankful and grateful heiress of Mordaunt had named the child—(was it an inspiration?—was it that there remained one divine spark of love in her bosom?)—was a little over two when the Signorina Rocca sent down an agent to take all the house for herself and the Signor Rocca. The news was not pleasant in Undercliff and yet both mother and daughter could not say why they were vexed to hear that their interesting widow had married again.

We need not explain that she had done nothing of the kind.

And then she came with her invalid companion, who, despite his pride in the success of his Lucie, in the change in his fortunes, was still an invalid, and required so much nursing as to need a man to sleep in his chamber; and never did mother lavish upon child more profusely the treasures of her love than did Lucy upon Hester. The babe, young though she was, could not but see how fondly she was appreciated, and crowed and laughed with delight at its mother's caresses.

And then the Signorina della Rocca won the hearts of Mrs. Procter and her daughter Jessie once more, when speaking of the future of her babe—of what she intended to do, and how she meant to bring her up.

And so the Signorina della Rocca, bound to the chariot-wheel of success, went away again, and saw her babe no more.

How this came about may be told in very short space, in very few words.

About two months after the departure of the signorina there came to Undercliff a sick gentleman. He had no particular complaint, but his skin was as white as new ivory, and his beard and hair nearly black. He looked altogether like a plant that had been brought up unnaturally, and had lost its color. A grave, saturnine, secret personage he was, scarcely speaking even to his brown-faced domestic.

The air of Undercliff was good, the nursing and care of St. Clair House were admirable, and the stranger mended space. Jessie, like a good, tender-hearted girl as she was, took pity on him, and was attentive in the highest degree.

The patient was grateful, and never even objected to the presence of the sprightly babe when Jessie came in to make his tea and chat.

"An interesting child; any relation?" he asked, listlessly, one day.

"A very nice child. Poor Hester! she is no relation; but her mamma was very dear to us."

"Was?" asked the stranger, much surprised. "An orphan, I presume?"

"No," said Jessie, without a thought of any mystery. And wrapped up in the new lodger, she told him a good deal of what the reader already knows.

He listened to her with a gleam of wonder, but said nothing more on the subject.

From that day, however, he took great notice of the child, and strove in every way to win its young affections—no easy task, as day by day it learned to love Jessie more and more.

Then the sick stranger got better, and went out for long drives, during which the little girl seemed at first forgotten; but soon Jessie and her young charge accompanied him.

This again lasted a week, during which time the stranger drove out assiduously to every village church in the neighborhood.

Then one day the stranger, the brown domestic, Jessie, and the child disappeared, leaving Mrs. Procter desolate beyond measure.

She sent for the Signorina della Rocca, who came in great haste from Paris; but all the descriptions given to the frenzied mother gave no clue. She in no way recognized the description of the abductor.

But the Signorina della Rocca was stunned with grief. With one of her determined character, however, no time was lost, and the idea entering her head that Hubert Treherne had followed her in disguise and stolen her babe roused in her soul a new and fierce storm of indignation.

Money was no object, and by the lavish expenditure of gold she procured the services of a clever detective, who at once went down to Devonshire.

His report was decisive. Since the departure of Mrs. Mordaunt, Hubert Treherne had never once left the estate, rarely the house. He had received no visitors, refusing to see them all, while not the faintest trace could be discovered of his having become possessed of the care of a child.

It would be vain to strive to paint the agonized feelings of the mother so suddenly bereaved. Her grief was unutterable, and yet there was in her mind a sense of relief. She firmly believed that whoever had been employed to trace her out, the theft was her husband's.

Much as she had to complain of him, deep as was her grievance, she had still that faith in him—she believed he would not wrong his own child.

But not all her exertions, artistic and cunning though they were, could bring home to him the abduction of Jessie and Hester.

Of her husband she heard the most dismal accounts. He shut himself up in his study, saw nobody, was never visible by day, drank deeply, and was never known to go abroad except at night. His wealth appeared to have proved rather a curse than a blessing, none being the happier for it.

But this was not the only rumor which reached the unhappy woman, who now but for the devotion and enthusiasm of Signor della Rocca would have succumbed in the struggle.

But this was a later discovery.

The child Hester had been born six years, and the signorina, after one or two futile visits to Undercliff, had given up her researches in that direction. Mrs. Procter had heard from Jessie, and that was all; but could give her no real news; and so the signora abandoned Undercliff, and bade her old landlady write should she ever hear any news, or gain the faintest clue to the existence of Hester.

Then she went down to the neighborhood of the manor-house of Trendledeep, there to discover, if possible, if her child were secreted in that neighborhood.

It was difficult to make any discoveries with regard to the interior of the manor-house. All the servants were quite new, and completely under the control of the new steward, Silas Regan, who in former days, she discovered, had been a kind of tutor to the young Trebernes.

Soon after the departure of Lucy, this personage—a sleek, soft-spoken man of between forty-five and fifty—came to the house, as we have already explained, and compelled the master to see him. It was said that Mr. Treherne peremptorily denied himself at first, but when he did see his old tutor, as suddenly turned round and pressed him to stop.

From that hour, despite some resistance on the part of the master, he was appointed head steward, and soon became the complete ruler.

The signorina went down just as he was in the plenitude of his power, and heard with surprise that the squire was completely governed by him, while he was notoriously purchasing property of all kinds in the neighborhood.

The Signor and Signorina della Rocco took up their residence at Plymouth, from whence they made continual excursions in search of health, of which truly both stood in need.

In these excursions they both approached very near to the manor-house, and at last the signorina ventured to put up at a road-side inn, within a mile of the residence which by right was hers.

The delicate state of her husband's health was a ready excuse for passing the night, while nothing was thought of a carriage lady taking a stroll in the cool of the evening across the park.

The signorina had strung herself up to a pitch that approached madness; know the fate of her child she must; this was a feeling she could not overcome.

In the wild hope that many people have as to something turning up, she wrapped herself in an old dark opera-cloak and hood, and crossing a stile, advanced slowly but resolutely toward the house.

Her feelings were of a mixed nature. Her nerves were strung up to a pitch of tension that her mind was scarcely able to bear; and yet, as she walked under the huge ancestral oaks, and beeches, and elms, she felt she must go on and know the worst.

Every inch of ground was known to her; and as she approached the house, she saw that the wing in which was the dining-room was alone illumined. With a rapid step she crossed the garden, and stood again near the open windows of the state apartments.

Two men were seated at table. One, though bloated, and oh! how changed, was clearly Treherne. His features were swollen and coarse, his eyes fierce and bloodshot, his speech thick and hesitating, but there were the well-known features.

His companion was the sleek, soft-spoken steward, the ex-tutor, Silas Regan.

"After all, Mr. Treherne," said the latter, "if I do spend money freely, what then. I am sure I have as much right to the revenues of Trendledeep Manor as you have."

"What mean you by such insolence, fellow?" cried the master in a thick, hoarse voice.

"I mean that, in the absence of the legal heir, we are but stewards. You have the honor and profit—I the profit without the honor. If you wish to have things otherwise, recall the rightful heir."

"Never!" said Treherne, with a curse.

"Well, so be it. And now, as you intend writing me a check, do not drink for awhile. Let us walk; the night is dark, but the moon will soon rise."

"Walk! I hate the night!"

"Come, I beg," said Regan, rising, and taking the other's arm, with whom next moment he sallied forth into the open air.

The signorina had only time to retreat ere she saw them come up the well-known gravel walk in her own direction, the master of Trendledeep muttering, and dissatisfied—the other, sternly authoritative.

They reached the fish-pond, which was tolerably deep—and here a gleam of moonlight fell upon the dark and frowning countenance of Treherne.

"What is the use of my having the money—what is the use of my having dared all to win it—if you are to rob me thus!" said the master, in a strangely whining voice.

"I care not how or by what means you are master," replied Regan, brutally; "but as long as I live I mean to finger the money. You are well aware, Treherne, that if I only chose to speak, the true heir—"

"Juggling fiend, avaunt!" cried the other, furiously, and lifting his clenched fist, he struck the steward in the face.

With a wild cry, the man fell backward on the edge of the fish-pond.

The signorina waited to see, to hear no more. Overcome with terror and horror, she fled, nor recovered in any way the tone of her mind until she found herself in London, in the earnest care of her devoted companion.

From that hour she seemed to change her nature, to avoid all allusion to the past, and to live in a world of her own creation.

For some time she dwelt wholly in Italy, where the devoted care of the signor appeared scarcely able to reconcile her to life.

Then time came with its assuaging hand, and allayed the regrets, and grief, and horror of the past, so that when we again see her, she is as beautiful—more so, perhaps, than ever—but with the beauty of a statue, and not of a living and existing being.

CHAPTER XXI.

AFTER THE RACES.

The London season was at its height. Parliament, as usual, collected together what the idle and impertinent world of fashion is apt to call the mob of members. Everybody who was anybody was busily engaged in going to parties, balls, and dinners, while the world below went on pretty well as usual, only aware of the brilliant existence above by the increase of a certain class of work—apart from that, as profoundly separate and unsympathetic as a Malay and a Chinaman.

It was the period for dinners at Richmond, rows on the river, picnics, and all the other familiar diversions of the younger and more boisterous members of the upper ten thousand.

Hampton races were on, and in this direction migrated many aspiring youths, who liked the *locale* all the better that they were quite sure to meet none of their female relatives at that gathering, which to those who were wearied of Belgravia and its society was regarded rather as a blessing than otherwise.

There was one very smart four-in-hand went down the road that morning, crowded by gentlemen and their grooms, which was not generally known to the regular visitors at Hampton; but which, quiet affair as it was, carried the fortunes of more than one noble family behind the four spanking grays, which were so well driven along the road by the Hon. Captain Vere Vickers, who, surrounded by all the men of the —— Guards, and some of their friends, were in for a day's pleasure, to be wound up by a supper which was expected to be something quite out of the common.

One feature of the day was that a young cornet had joined that week, and was therefore regarded by many as good for a butt in the morning, for a pigeon in the evening.

But though extremely young, femininely handsome, to all appearance delicate, Cornet Cecil Mordaunt was no simpleton. His manner was graceful, dignified and correct. He rejected no advances, but repelled all jokes that savored of roughness by his own ready happiness of retort.

On the ground, when the excitement of even this purely Cockney race roused some of the youths to risk tens or twenties, Cecil Mordaunt declined to bet.

"Are you afraid to lose a little money?" sneered a youth about two years older than himself.

"No! afraid to make a fool of myself," replied the young man.

"How so?" asked the other, with a frown.

"By doing that which can in no way benefit me—betting in the dark. I know nothing and care less about the horses. Why should I bet?"

"Well said, youngster!" remarked a bearded captain, who had seen service, though only nine and twenty, and whose courage and devotion to his profession were both equally well recognized.

Cecil Mordaunt bowed, and joined the captain.

"You are of ours?" said the captain—Walter Arundell.

"Yes; I joined yesterday. My name is Cecil Mordaunt."

The elder officer looked at him with a keen and scrutinizing glance.

"Any relative of Sir Vincent Mordaunt?" he inquired.

"His only son."

"My name is Arundell—Captain Arundell," said the other, and the conversation was changed to the ordinary topics of the day.

The elder officer took, however, an opportunity earnestly to warn his young friend against betting and gambling.

Cecil thanked him, and hoped, as they were in the same regiment, he might profit by his good advice.

"My advice is given," said Captain Walter Arundell Haldane, gravely; "you must profit by it or not as you think proper. Come! all the fellows think I am sermonizing you."

Cecil was made no butt of that day; and, in fact, by his modesty and good sense made more friends than enemies on that memorable occasion.

They lunched upon the ground rather merrily, wine being by no means stinted, and then away they went on the homeward road, as light-hearted and merry a crew as ever returned from races.

The owner of the drag, Captain Vere Vickers, drove. He was a cool and knowing hand; but somehow or other at Teddington, for a moment mistaking the road, and then endeavoring to right himself, the drag swerved, launched over, and was dragged twenty yards sideways on the ground before it could be stopped.

The confusion was horrible, and for a moment or two none could make out the result. Nearly every one, it turned out, was slightly bruised, while Cecil Mordaunt lay insensible near a curb, and to all appearance killed.

"Stunned and his arm broken," said Captain Walter Haldane to the others.

At this moment a garden gate opened, and a young girl, followed by a woman of about thirty, hurried out.

The girl was the most singularly beautiful blonde, with golden hair and blue eyes, the captain had ever seen, and he gazed at her as if she had been a fairy.

"Bring him in here," she said, her rosy cheeks turning pale as she gazed at the insensible youth.

No second word was needed, and five minutes later the youthful cornet lay on a couch in a small room looking out on the garden. Vinegar and brandy were both applied, and then he both breathed and opened his eyes.

A surgeon now hurried up, and as Captain Haldane had asserted, declared his arm broken, his system severely shaken; but pronounced at once that if he could be nursed for some days without removal all would be well.

"What say you to removal in a carriage?" said Captain Haldane, looking at the ladies.

"He must stay here," answered the young lady, quickly. "Do you have a bed prepared, nurse; I will answer for the rest."

The doctor declared that nothing else could ensure his rapid cure, the captain thought it very satisfactory, and Cecil himself nodded approval.

"Captain," he whispered, as the other took his leave, "come to-morrow. Don't let anything leak out that will reach home until I see you again, there's a good fellow!"

"Certainly, my boy," responded the captain, warmly; "and now to see to the other wounded. Farewell, and keep up your spirits!"

This the captain said with a smile, and went out, leaving the fairy too occupied to receive any further thanks from him.

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 47.)

Bonaparte's Love-Letters.

The great Napoleon, when absent on his campaigns, used to write love-letters to his wife, Josephine. Here is one of his short war notes—

"I write very often to you, my dear love, but very seldom hear from you. You are a fickle, ugly, wicked creature. Perfidious! to deceive a poor husband and ardent lover! Must he forfeit his rights because he is far away, burdened with difficulties, cares and fatigue? Without his Josephine, without the assurance of her love, what remains for him on earth? What can he do? A thousand loving kisses."

The next is curiously tender—

"I don't love you a bit; on the contrary, I detest you. You are an ugly, stupid, wicked hussy. You never write to me, and you do not love your husband. You know the delight your letters afford me, and yet you send me only a few dozen hurried lines. Pray, madam, what do you do with yourself all day? What important business is it that prevents you writing to your fond lover? What affection stifles and puts aside the love, the tender and constant love, you promised me?

"Who can this new wonder be—this new lover who absorbs all your time, tyrannizes over your days, and prevents you from thinking of your husband? Take care, Josephine; some fine night, the doors closed, and I will surprise you. But seriously, I am very uneasy, my dear love, at receiving no news of you; write me four pages immediately, full of those charming things that fill my heart with tenderness and delight. I hope to embrace you before long; then I shall cover you with a million burning kisses.

"BONAPARTE."

Ever My Queen.

BY PIERCE EGAN,

AUTHOR OF "THE FLOWER OF THE FLOCK," "VIOLET; OR, THE WONDER OF KINGSWOOD CHASE," "MARK JARRETT'S DAISY," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

TO A FLOWER POT.

Anne Marchmont, or Sydney, as we shall henceforth call her, with a scowl of wrath at being treated and commanded by Cleveland Dysart as if she were a Hindoo slave, applied the usual restoratives to bring back Etheline to consciousness. But she exerted herself with no feeling of sympathy for the unfortunate girl. She would, in her hard, cold, unfeeling way, have suffered her to glide out of life in her swoon without attempting to arrest the ebbing of her breath, if she had not regarded her as an essential instrument in the accomplishment of the vengeance, which had been a cherished idea ever since she had been made acquainted with the ruin of her sister by the Marquis of Hastingleigh.

As she contemplated the pale, motionless features of Etheline, an expression of bitterness and hate passed over her own, and she muttered—

"She is so like her—she who unsparingly robbed Lyddy of even the delusion of her happiness that I will have no pity for her, no mercy on her. Bring her back to life, yes, for events are on the gallop now, and without this dainty piece of high-born clay, this hot-house flower so long reared in lowly places, I cannot strike home with half the deadly force I meditate. This inflated, pompous magnate, with the magic eyes, has formed his scheme of vengeance too. So long as his plans run in couples with mine I will not interfere or thwart them; but the fool is sentimental, and fancies himself yet in love, burning with a hot and ardent passion, raised in his breast when a youth, nourished in absence on imagination, and now he dreams will be pampered, not by the same object of worship, but its resemblance. He will be swayed by this love-fit and she, finding the power she has acquired over him, may influence him to interpose between me and my revenge. If he dazzles her eyes and her brain with his riches and his promises, he may make her fancy that she can return his attachment, and thus raise up a power which would be stronger than I could cope with. I must, therefore, furnish her with such little scraps of information respecting certain events which transpired when in her childhood as shall make the tender vows he may whisper to her like the droppings of poison in her ear."

It was some days, however, before Etheline displayed sufficient strength to take part in any conversation with this woman, who in some mysterious way had changed her relation to her. She had without a word or a sign descended from the position of authority, which she had so long held over her as her maternal parent, and subsided, as it were, into a mere attendant.

Etheline saw this, and it gave birth to a purpose which she had secretly formed, and which she had resolved at all sacrifices and hazards to carry out. But she knew that she required strength to support her in her undertaking, and time to make her arrangements; and in this interval she resolved, if possible, to acquire as much knowledge of her real history as could be drawn, coaxed, wrung out of Anne Sydney.

That it would be a painful, agonizing, and unhappily a humiliating recital, she foresaw; if it were not, why should she be in her present wretched condition? But, bad, harrowing, as it might be, she yearned to know all that could be communicated, feeling that the worst she could hear would still be better than the suspense she was suffering, than the unsatisfied wanderings of her mind into the wildest regions of speculation.

The plea of indisposition and weakness spared her the visits of Cleveland Dysart for some days. A physician who was summoned to attend her, aided her in her design to keep her chamber for some little time, by stating that her feeble health was the result of mental disorder, and would succumb only to quietude and such reliefs to thought as could be furnished to her.

It was with some surprise, and more suspicion, that Anne Sydney noticed her efforts to regain her strength. She took readily whatever was prescribed for her, and seemed to be strangely pleased when she found her physical condition to be daily improving. She spoke but little; but there was a restless movement of her eyes going on, as though her brain were at work in the formation of a secret design, which would develop itself before long.

Anne Sydney watched these signs of mental restlessness and activity with a feeling as of almost scornful derision. She had a shrewd suspicion of what was going on in Etheline's mind; but she assured herself with a feeling of serenity that she could take no step, nor even attempt the prosecution of any plan she might devise, unobserved or uncontrolled by her.

Etheline spoke but little, chiefly in monosyllables, and always in reply to some question addressed to her; but she rendered Anne Sydney by degrees curiously uncomfortable, by incessantly gazing in her face, with an eager, anxious, questioning look. It seemed to the woman that she was desirous to be asked why she bent upon her those hungry glances of inquiry, and somehow she felt a repugnance to respond to them, as Etheline evidently desired.

It was also a matter of wondering and unsatisfied speculation to her that Etheline's recovery was hastened by the departure of Cleveland Dysart from the house on some secret mission to the country. Magic or no magic, she had but too palpable evidence that Etheline was physically affected by the proximity as well as the presence of that mysterious man. When in the same room with him, she appeared to fall into a lethargic, semi-trance-like state, and Anne had detected his approach in the corridor, when on his way to inquire after Etheline's health, by the shudder which pervaded the latter's frame, and the faint blue tinge which overspread her features. Beyond an emotion of surprise, it did not affect her; it touched no sympathies and awakened no pity. She saw in it only a new instrument by which to strengthen her control over the movements of her unhappy charge.

With her restoration to her normal state of health, Etheline grew more restless, and her features assumed a set, rigid firmness of expression, such as Anne Sydney never remembered them to have exhibited. As there appeared to be mingled with it, too, signs of a secret feeling of desperation, she deemed it advisable to try and elicit what was working in her mind, and by seeming to coincide with them, ascertain what her views were, so as to be able to use them as best suited her own purposes.

One morning, observing her restlessly pacing the apartment, utterly indifferent to all the luxurious means of amusing and interesting her with which for her exclusive use it was furnished in profusion, she perceived written on her colorless features the workings of a mind resolutely bent upon the immediate execution of some plan which she had inwardly devised.

With a quiet but deeply-interested curiosity, she watched her proceed to the window and gaze longingly and anxiously into the half-deserted street beneath. She saw her humid eyes upturn to the sky, and her lips move rapidly with some unuttered aspiration, and there was a tightening and compression of her fingers which to Anne Sydney were very suggestive.

The moment had come to worm out of her what her secret purpose was, and as Etheline resumed her walk, purposely assuming a half-contemptuous, half-derisive manner, she laughed affectedly, and remarked—

"What an air of mystery! What a wonderful expression of countenance! What marvellous fancies are tossing over each other in your mind, Etheline? What grand scheme have you been hatching? For three days at least you have been busy devising, and planning, and plotting—to do what? Out with it, Etheline! You know you can't keep anything secret from me."

Etheline paused abruptly, and confronted her with a haughty mien, which momentarily and powerfully reminded the woman of the Viscountess Hastingleigh, as she had seen her in years gone by, when the proud mistress of a princely home, on the very night she spoke to her prior to her fatal departure to cross the Stepping-Stones.

In distinct and emphatic tones, Etheline said—

"My design is to have unreserved communion with you now upon those matters which affect me most closely and most dearly—matters which you can reveal, and you shall. The moment for which I have so long looked has arrived. I am at an age to comprehend in every particular all you may have to disclose. We are alone, and shall not be interrupted. I, too, am free from—from an influence which—" she shuddered, and for an instant cast her eyes affrightedly round her as she murmured—"palsies me." Then, by an effort recovering herself, she proceeded—"but I am unshackled now, and I seek to know from you what it is my right to know—what it is my duty to hear, no matter how painful the revelations may prove to me, how mortifying to my pride, how humiliating to my sense of rectitude. I have heard assertions, and am incredulous. You can speak out, and I must believe. Speak, therefore, and plainly. Keep back nought, spare me nothing—for I have schooled myself to meet the blow I foreshadow is about to fall upon me, and yours as the hand which can and will strike it."

Anne Sydney did not immediately answer this speech, spoken with a strange kind of authoritative earnestness, but directed her cold, gray eyes upon the fair, pale face turned to her. She perused the beautiful and delicately refined features with a searching scrutiny, and sought to find depicted there some purpose beyond a mere desire to listen to a revelation which she had been told, however much it might pain her, would not affect the social relations which had been arranged for her. She saw resolution, and energy, and stubbornness written but too plainly, and certain remembrances of traits in Etheline's character made her feel that it would be necessary for her to temporize if she hoped to draw out her covert intentions.

So she pretended not to notice the scarcely suppressible excitement with which every limb and nerve of Etheline trembled, shrugged her shoulders slightly, and forcing into her features an expression of compassionating pity, she said—

"Be content with your ignorance of circumstances you cannot alter any more than you could put yonder sun back to begin the dawn again. You have heard, I should imagine, quite sufficient to prevent you desiring to hear more, and though you say you would rather believe what I may reveal than anything respecting you that came from other lips, take my advice, and do not unsettle your mind. To what good? Those events which have happened cannot be recalled, and if you were to be put in possession of every incident, even the most trivial, you cannot change the occurrences which have caused you to be a discarded, disinherited outcast."

Etheline's blood seemed to freeze at this unfeeling statement, yet she contracted her brows, and in a stern and resolute tone ejaculated—

"Nevertheless, I demand to hear all."

"I am kind in refusing to reply," objected Anne Sydney, with a curling lip which belied her words. "What would you have? You are about to become the bride of a wealthy gentleman. What if he knows what you were—what you are—and why? He is content to introduce you to the world as his wife. Who will see the brass beneath the coating of his gold? You may face the world with an unruffled countenance, for you cannot blush for shame at facts you are ignorant of. Ask me no more."

"Your innuendoes are to me worse than your facts can be, however terrible. I have heard *his* insinuations; I hear your hideous suggestions, and they make me desperate," rejoined Etheline, with an excitement which a little startled the woman, who was eyeing her keenly. "I will know all—the worst that you can—that you dare repeat to me. I ask no merciful consideration, no sympathy—nothing from you but bare facts—truthful facts. When I know all without reserve, I shall know my course; and I insist on your at once clearing up the mystery which surrounds my birth."

"You insist!" echoed Anne Sydney, contemptuously.

"I—I insist—demand—command you, woman, to reveal all you know!" cried Etheline, with a vehemence which made her recoil. "I have nothing to hope, therefore nothing to fear. My future cannot suffer more than it has suffered, except that I cannot endure this enforced ignorance of my birth and of my parents. Come a tale of wrongs, of woe, of shame, I expect it—I can, I will bear it; but this pitiless secrecy is a burden beyond my strength to sustain."

"Weak girl," rejoined Anne Sydney, half-tauntingly, "in common charity to you—"

"Cease such mockery," interposed Etheline, with flashing eyes; "it is a palpable hypocrisy, which you know I can detect and scorn."

"Indeed!" ejaculated the woman, elevating her eyebrows.

"Aye," returned Etheline, with an energy and determination unlike her former self, "I know your true character only too well. I have always been able to read your hard, unscrupulous, selfish promptings through your most plausible speeches. I have never been deceived by them; I am not now. I know that you never had a spark of affection for me, a trace of sympathy with my forlorn condition, or charity for my silent misery. I have so little faith in any human consideration you may profess for me, that I do not hesitate now to tell you the conviction I have for years entertained, however impulsive and unreasoning it may be—it is, that you are the cause of my desolate position. Do you pause now?"

Anne Sydney stood transfixed for a moment in undisguised and unaffected astonishment. Etheline had spoken with so much excitement, so much passion, so unlike the calm, self-possessed manner which was indeed peculiar to her, that she, who had reared her from infancy, and had never witnessed anything approaching such a display as this, might well have felt amazed. Yet it was only for a brief interval.

Again she was smitten, even as if she had received a blow on brain and heart, by the startling resemblance which Etheline bore to her mother, whom once she had seen in a state of angered excitement such as Etheline had just exhibited. This recognition appeared to act as a torch upon a heap of combustibles. Her neck and forehead became aflame, and the old, long-cherished hate of the cause—so she considered her—of her sister's ruin and blighted ambition, burnt more fiercely than ever within her.

"At least I can trample this butterfly to dust for her dear sake," she thought. Then setting her teeth together, she bent her brows down over her eyelids. She scowled at her and grated harshly, "Wilful, too—wilful—like the wanton who bore you."

Then she slowly locked her arms one within the other across her waist, and concentrating a look of rancorous hate into her rigid, sallow features, she subjoined—

"Know all, fool! You shall have your wish. First, let me give you a solution of your wonderful instinct in reference to me and the love I ought to bear you. I had a sister, young, fair, and as innocent as you. She was seen by your noble father when his heart and his hand were free; he fell in love with her, wooed her, won her, would have made her the lady of his household, the partner of his rank and wealth. Your mother stepped between her and him. It broke her heart; she was drowned—is dead."

Etheline's eyelids closed for an instant, as if she had been seized with a sudden faintness, but almost instantly she recovered herself and stood like a statue.

The revelation was coming now.

Anne Sydney, gazing with a lurid glance in her eyes at the hapless girl before her, went on speaking, slowly, but with a venomous accent, which betrayed how deep-set her hate was.

"You see how much affection I ought to feel for the child of him and of her who hounded my poor girl out of life. Know what affection I did bear for that exalted pair, and how I displayed it. The wealthy soldier of fortune beneath whose roof you now are, saw your dainty lady mother when she was hand and heart free, sought her love, and obtained it, secured it—that is, her love; but where coronets float, hands not hearts are in quest. Your mother tossed her love to the winds, and gave her hand to the coronet."

Again Etheline's eyes closed as if she were going to swoon; but she stood as still and rigid as though she were rooted to the spot.

"The poor soldier was troubled in his mind, of course; perhaps your lady mother was not altogether quite at her ease concerning her own conduct; and so, by way of mutual explanation, they decided to meet—to meet in secret—to settle who was to blame in the rupture of the love match. Perhaps it was unwise to defer this clandestine interview until after you were a little babbling child of two years or more; but it was a fatal error to appoint me as your nurse. You see, girl, my sister's brain was too weak to bear her disappointment, and she was a helpless lunatic. I had her to avenge. I picked up the note addressed to your high-born mother, the wedded wife of a proud peer of the realm, by her discarded lover, the humble captain in a marching regiment. I gave that note into your father's hands, and he made a third at that secret interview. From that night the jilt—the wanton—the women who killed my sister—never returned to her husband's roof. You were tossed into my keeping as a loathed symbol of a dishonored name. I have reared you as what you are, your highest pinnacle being by an accident the throne in a work-girls' room. What you will be, will, I warn you, still depend upon my will. The maniac who was jilted by the mother, and is fascinated by the thought of making her daughter pass muster in his heart as the original, may plot, and plan, and design, he may succeed for a time in making you the queen of his name and his wealth, his heart and his home, but only so far as I will permit the tether to extend—for the end is yet to come. Now you know all, are you satisfied?"

It was as if Etheline had become deaf and blind and stunned. She stood motionless, scarcely breathing, but yet there was a slight convulsion of her frame which was perceptible to Anne Sydney as she awaited her reply, and she detected that she was making an almost superhuman effort to control her inward agony, and to appear calm, if not undisturbed, by what she had heard.

Within a minute or so she upraised her lids, and fastened her eyes on the pale gray orbs of Anne Sydney, and in a voice so unlike its natural tone the woman started, she said—

"I am not yet satisfied. You have not yet told me my name. What is it?"

"I reserve that," answered the woman, promptly; "there are reasons why I may not yet reveal it—but you will know it soon enough—too soon, whenever it reaches your ears."

"Still I wish to hear it," exclaimed Etheline, with apparent difficulty.

"It is tainted," persisted Anne Sydney, bitterly. "It is a thing to avoid, not to hunger for."

"You hate her who bears it. Give it to me, that I may avoid her who has borne it—it will pander to your hate, and it will—"

What more Etheline intended to say was lost by a sudden suspension of all her faculties. She became insensible at a moment. She did not fall, she did not totter or sway, but she looked so like one suddenly smitten with death that the woman, with an extorted cry, ran to her, caught her by the arm forcibly, and exclaimed—

"Etheline!"

A terrible shudder ran through her frame, her eyelids flattered for a moment, then she raised them high, and turned her face to the door.

"*He* is here!" she murmured.

Anne Sydney, despite her nerve, notwithstanding her disbelief in magnetic influence, felt an awful creeping of the flesh as she heard the words, and she turned a half-horror-stricken look toward the door.

It was closed tightly, and there was no sound in its vicinity.

"This is absurd frenzy," she ejaculated as she hastened to the door and threw it open.

She fell back with a short cry, for Cleveland Dysart, in the dark green uniform of his rifle regiment, was standing at the door, which he seemed to have that moment reached.

He stepped over the threshold and entered the apartment. There was an exultant yet a malignant expression on his sallow face as he advanced to the still semi-insensible girl, and he took both her hands in his. He fastened his gaze upon her eyes, and he felt the tremor which passed through her frame vibrating at her finger tips, and he smiled.

"Etheline, mine," he exclaimed, in a low, soft voice, "you are in indifferent health, and in depressed spirits. The confinement here is too close for you, and you are suffering in frame and in mind. I have determined to give you some carriage exercise, and to join with it a little pleasant recreation. This is a great day at the Horticultural Gardens; they are in the height of their beauty, and there is the finest flower-show of the season. The gardens will be thronged by the most fashionable society in London. You will come in contact with some of the highest in the land, as regards both titles and wealth. There will be many of supreme rank, and some of great and noble reputation. There will be not a few whose names are familiar to you as to the rest of the world, some of whom you have not heard and have never seen, and there will be one or more of whom you have heard, but have not seen for years—not since you were a tiny girl, scarce able to run without your nurse's aid."

Anne Sydney started as she heard him repeat the last sentence with a peculiar stress upon the words, and looked eagerly in his face. His attention was riveted upon Etheline's white countenance, but she read, as she thought, his hidden meaning.

Etheline, however, did not appear to hear what he said, much less to comprehend it. She seemed, as was always the case in his presence, to be in a kind of waking dream.

"You will accompany me, dear Etheline?" he pursued, pressing gently the soft fingers he had not yet released.

"Yes," she responded, listlessly, as though she had no power to exercise the faintest effort of her will.

At a sign from Cleveland, Anne Sydney led Etheline from the room, and presently returned with her attired in garments of the richest materials and of the highest fashion. She seemed to have offered no objection to this proceeding, but to have silently acquiesced in all that was required of her.

When they were ready, Anne Sydney gazed steadfastly at Cleveland.

"Am I to accompany you?" she asked; adding, significantly, "Mine is not an unknown face!"

He returned her look, and mused for a moment. Then he answered—

"It may be of use. Yes."

Taking Etheline's passive hand in his, he led her from the room, down the staircase, out of the hall into the street.

She drew a deep breath as the fresh air played upon her face. For an instant her eyes raced over the thoroughfare right and left, and then her eyelids drooped suddenly, for she caught the star-like eyes of Miss Dysart—who was seated in an open carriage, to which were attached two magnificent black horses—fixed upon her own.

Into this carriage Cleveland Dysart assisted her, and took his place at her side. Anne Sydney occupied a seat in the rear, with an attendant in dark gray livery.

At a sign from Cleveland the carriage was driven away, the high-bred horses proceeding at such a dashing pace that it attracted the attention of every one past whom it swept.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE DAUGHTER, THE FATHER AND THE MOTHER.

Etheline looked supremely beautiful in a toilet which had been provided for her by a "house of fashion," under the direction of Cleveland Dysart. Never did noble extraction assert its right with the aid of extrinsic adornment more completely, and if anything could have added to the sinister and malevolent expression which glittered in the eyes of Miss Dysart, as she scrutinized her face and dress, it was that she looked in all respects the daughter of a marchioness, and also the child of the woman whose beauty had lured from her the only man she had ever loved.

As the carriage was whirled through the broad thoroughfares of the aristocratic quarter of the great city, the pampered horses plunging and prancing, it excited notice in all directions, but especially when it went dashing through Hyde Park on its way to South Kensington.

It was driven so rapidly that a passing glance only was obtained of those who were seated within it; but the equipage and the style were of a class so superior that numbers of the *haut ton* made a note of it, in order to set on foot inquiries respecting the occupants.

Etheline sat apparently in a state of apathy. She betrayed no interest in the position she occupied, in her companions in the vehicle, or the persons who were passing in throngs in opposite directions.

Occasionally, perhaps, as a gentleman, young, elegant enough to be the son of a duke, mounted on a high-bred horse, went by, and gazed in her face with elevated eyebrows, she would hazard a quick glance, but only to avert it with a sigh of disappointment.

Cleveland Dysart, who watched her almost incessantly, observed this, and appeared to understand its meaning, for he smiled grimly, and he said to himself—

"If we should encounter the fellow she loves, I shall recognize him by the tell-tale crimson of her cheek, and—and how I will make him writhe, as I have been made to writhe."

The carriage halted at the entrance to the splendidly laid-out gardens of the Horticultural Society, and Cleveland Dysart descended and assisted Etheline and his sister to alight. They passed in under the covered ways to the open gardens beyond, to the glass houses and marquees filled with the choicest examples of the gardener's art in floriculture.

The broad paths between the *parterres*, terraced and adorned with plants and fountains, were thronged with fashionable personages, laughing, chatting, pressing onward in different directions, and seeming as if they knew not what trial and trouble was, and had never heard that there were such things as grief and misery in the world.

Yet they tattled and scandalized, satirized and calumniated, more than they flattered or praised. They circulated shocking innuendoes and the cruellest of slanders, as though, in their belief, as opposed to outward show, the world was full of impropriety and peccadilloes, if not wickedness.

Cleveland kept Etheline close to his side, apparently heedless what position his sister occupied in the promenade, and he made Anne Sydney follow closely in the footsteps of the former, so that when Etheline's face was observed by a passer-by, he would see that of Anne Sydney almost at the same moment.

His strange influence—electro-magnetic or mesmeric, or whatever it might have been—he exerted over his fair young companion and intended bride to the utmost of his power, for he fancied that amid this throng of individuals some of whom unconsciously had powers resembling his own, his influence over her was weakened.

He was led to imagine this because the listlessness which she had evinced when beneath his roof and in the carriage seemed to be vanishing, and in its place a keen and eager interest in the persons crowding about her to be obtaining.

He thought it strange and a little disquieting that she paid but small heed to the magnificent herbaceous plants, plethoric with huge blossoms of the most delicate and beautiful shades of color, to which he directed her attention every now and then, but that, evidently unconscious of the remarks it might elicit, she scanned the faces of all of both sexes whom she met with an eager perusal, as if expecting to discover one, at least, it would be all the world to her to encounter.

"She is looking for some one whom she hopes to meet here. Whom can she have known in a life passed among the common herd who would mingle here with rank and affluence?" he mused with a feeling of secret apprehension. "I do not know all yet, and I must not, it seems, from what I observe, overrate my power over her. I will put a question to the woman who has had charge of her so long. She may throw a light on this."

He dropped, as if accidentally, behind, and with a look of his eyes he directed his sister to take his place by the side of Etheline. She immediately obeyed him, in the hope of being able to humiliate her companion by references to the throng with whom they were mingling, and by intimating they would avoid her as a leper if they only knew who she was.

She lost no time in commencing her insinuations, but, to her angry mortification, she found that Etheline not only did not feel her cruel stabs, but they did not even seem to reach her. She had increased her steps, and moved quicker, so that the slow, rigid, nun-like Agatha had something to do to keep close to her side; then, too, she saw that every one appeared to look on Etheline with a conviction that she was of high rank, and wonder that, being so, they knew her not.

Suddenly Etheline stopped short; a faint cry issued from her lips, and a crimson hue suffused her features. Yet she did not appear abashed; but, on the contrary, assumed a carriage which would have graced the bearing of a marchioness conscious of her own dignity.

Agatha Dysart, watchful as an eagle, saw this movement, and heard the bubbling sound issue from her lips. She also saw who had occasioned this agitation; saw with unequivocal surprise that it was a gentleman with silver hair and mustache, who was accompanied by two ladies and a young, dreamy-eyed gentleman, who looked thrice as haughty and inflated as any position in life would fairly warrant.

A sound also had issued from the lips of the elderly stranger, and his eyebrows were high up on his forehead, and the expression on his face was one of great amazement.

He certainly recognized Etheline, as she had done him, but he looked as if he doubted the evidence of his eyes, and he betrayed an embarrassment which, but for the attendant circumstances, would have seemed ludicrous.

He paused as if to speak, and even murmured—

"Only a work-girl? Incredible!"

Then a flashing thought seemed to whisper to him that he could not do so at least there. Yet another equally swift suggestion urged him to make some recognition, for it might happen that he would yet have to sue to her for a favor. Still it was not the time and place, and with a mastery over the situation which such a man as he could exercise, he proceeded onward, making no sign.

But not without having been observed by Cleveland Dysart, as he was about to leave Anne Sydney, with the queries he had put to her unsatisfied.

"Who is that?" he asked, as the silver-haired aristocrat passed him with a stately mien.

Anne Sydney shook her head.

"I do not know," she answered.

He uttered a word of vexation.

"You know nothing," he ejaculated, as he moved up to Etheline's side.

"Too much for you, unless you alter you ways to me," she thought viciously, as he quitted her.

As soon as he had resumed his place between Etheline and his sister, the latter said, with a rising upper lip—

"Our *protegee* is not unknown to some of those who walk in high places, it appears. You saw?"

"I did," he returned, coldly.

Then, after a short pause, he bent his head near to Etheline's.

"That gentleman with the white mustache and you have met before?" he remarked, looking beneath his eyelashes at her face.

"Yes," she returned, slowly, and in an undertone.

"What is his name?" he interrogated, in his usual low, luring voice, and as if her reply was a matter of indifference to him.

She did not reply, but moved steadily onward, now with downcast eyes, and apparently a dreaming brain. He waited for a moment, and then he added, with affected playfulness—

"Will you not tell it to me?"

"No!" she answered, with a quiet decision which made his heart for the instant leap in his body.

He glanced swiftly at her, and saw that her brows were in the least degree contracted, and that her small, exquisitely-shaped lips were perceptibly compressed.

"Aha!" he thought, with a hard smile moving his mouth and eyes. "The will is striving to reassert itself. The two forces will come into opposition for the first time. We shall see with what result."

They moved onward slowly, and entered one of the handsome glass corridors lined with rare foreign plants, in tubs and vases, while beautifully-shaped and delicately-tinted trailers and climbers twined and crept up thin espaliers, adorning the transparent sides, and drooping from the crystal roof in profuse clusters of the richest blossoms, mauve and rose, gold and amethyst, primrose and peach.

The air was warm, and faint with perfume; scarcely any who entered therein but found it oppressive, and difficult to endure; yet throngs pressed in, crowding each other in a genteel fashion, making affected exclamations of surprised delight and elegant entrancement, devoutly hoping at the same time to get out of the "hot chamber" as soon as it was stylishly possible.

Etheline, did not, however, betray any symptoms of faintness or eagerness to escape from the assemblage. She moved with a slow step, and though she appeared to be unconscious of the notice she attracted, especially that of many a titled personage, she scanned the faces of all who passed her, especially the distinguished of her own sex.

Yet over without satisfying some craving that filled her mind.

While yet within the corridor, she found herself suddenly the object of a wondering stare from a young and distinguished-looking man. It was not exactly rude, but it was too pointed for her to endure without averting her face, especially as his was not the one for which she had been searching—if she had been looking for one, that is.

Cleveland Dysart, whose eyes had not been removed from her countenance since he had detected her design, as he suspected, to force her will into action, observed the movement of her head, and instantly looked to see who had occasioned it.

The frown on his brow fled, and an expression of eager excitement lighted up his face, as though it were a beacon, and a fire had been suddenly kindled within.

"Lovat," he exclaimed, in a sharp undertone, to draw attention to himself, "I am very glad to have met you; I wished to exchange a word or two with you."

Lord Ailsa Lovat, for it was he, turned his eyes on Cleveland, started at the sound of his voice, and as he recognized him a faint blush mounted to his cheek-bones.

"Glendale," he ejaculated, hastily. "Uncle Dysart, I am deuced glad I have met you too, for—"

He suddenly checked himself, and, bowing to Miss Dysart, said—

"I beg a million pardons, Aunt Agatha, for my abstraction."

She responded with a sneering smile—

"Your excuse is a potent one, I apprehend. Ask your uncle else."

She so evidently indicated Etheline by this observation, that the latter felt a shade pass over her features, and she partly turned away.

Cleveland Dysart responded to the remark by a look at his sister which made her shrink back embarrassed, while Lord Lovat, venturing on a vacant laugh, exclaimed, scarce conscious of what he was saying—

"A—well—a—'pon my honor—the fact is—a—I am acquainted with a most wonderfully executed portrait by Thorburn, which St. Leonards—a—that is—a friend of mine possesses. It so remarkably resembles the young lady at your side that for the moment I—I believed I was gazing at the original."

"You were not," responded Cleveland, curtly.

"But you have not introduced me," persisted his lordship, again directing his gaze scrutinizingly, though not rudely, at Etheline's face.

"Miss Smith—Lord Ailsa Lovat," responded Cleveland, brusquely; adding, sharply, "Meet me in the open presently, I wish to speak with you."

Lord Lovat, however, performed his "kotow" to Etheline with much ceremony and displayed no inclination to be thus disposed of, for after he failed to catch a glance from the eye of Etheline, upon which he had fully calculated during the progress of the little ceremonial, he said, rather decisively—

"I will join you, uncle. I have a word to say to you."

"Presently," returned Cleveland, roughly, so unlike the melodious tones in which he was wont to address Etheline that she noticed it.

He touched her arm and moved her forward, so that Lord Lovat fell back with Agatha Dysart. The instant he was alone by her side he indicated Etheline with a movement of *his* eyebrows, and whispered—

"Who is she?"

"The future mistress of Glendale," she muttered, with a hissing sound; "a St. Leonards—in plaster of Paris."

He started, and looked with wondering inquiry into her rigid face. He saw the venomous glitter in her eyes, and the malignant expression on her thin, tightened lips. He did not quite understand her allusion, unless it meant that the young lady before him was some unacknowledged relative of the Marquis of St. Leonards, which would account for her resemblance to the portrait he had mentioned, and perhaps to that fearful struggle he had witnessed on board the yacht.

A cold perspiration broke out over him. He edged up to the side of Cleveland Dysart, and whispered in his ear—

"Let us turn back. This way leads to the large conservatory. It is full, and the Guards' band is kicking up an infernal din which will stun you."

"It is my purpose to go to the conservatory," coldly and positively.

"By and by, perhaps, when it is thinner," urged Lord Lovat, anxiously. "It will be so much better."

"Why?" demanded Cleveland, piercing him with his glittering eyes.

Lord Lovat reddened and fidgeted; but as if the words were extracted from him by a power he could not resist, he answered—

"Well, the fact is, what I intended to say to you by and by is that"—he lowered his voice—"in the conservatory St. Leonards, Lady Hylda Beauclaire, and a large party are gathered. They occupy a very prominent position near the entrance, and you cannot avoid coming in contact with them if you go in—at least, for an hour or so. I am sure, uncle, you will avoid a scene in such a place as this, if it be possible."

He drew back aghast as he finished, for such an expression settled on the features of Cleveland that it chilled his blood, and he was not reassured when he heard him reply—

"Thanks! You have given me the information it was my intention to have sought from you. One word—call me Dysart only. I know the tie of affinity which connects us—the world is indifferent to it. Come, Etheline!"

Agatha, as she followed with Lord Ailsa, looking dazed, murmured—

"Vain aspiration! He would be a boy again, for his bride is yet a child. Uncle is another word for elderly," and she laughed with bitter irony.

Lord Lovat would, notwithstanding his relief, have again intervened between Cleveland and his purpose, but that he pressed forward so quickly and so pertinaciously that he placed a dozen or more persons, equally urgent in striving to enter the conservatory, between them. Besides, with some strange perversity, it appeared to him his Aunt Agatha hung on his arm, and dropped into a slower pace helping, he fancied intentionally, to lengthen the space between them, so that Cleveland and Etheline had already passed the entrance to the conservatory before he could overtake them.

The crush there was conducted with a sarcastic, grim, and even savage politeness, but it was as polite as it was pertinacious. Lord Lovat elbowed his way, dragging his icy companion with him, profuse in his requests for "pardon," and "begging to be allowed," but pressing onward until he was fairly in the extensive crystal chamber. There he found order prevailing, and room to circulate with freedom. Royalty was present, and as a slow movement from a favorite opera was being played as a solo with exquisite pathos and taste by an accomplished musician, an appreciable quietude prevailed.

Cleveland, with a red gleam in his eye like that of a famished tiger, moved onward slowly and glidingly, until he gained a place which brought him nearly opposite to a very fashionable party seated on chairs in the immediate vicinity of the royal personages present.

Etheline's eager quest of a face she secretly hoped to see had given way to a kind of bewilderment at finding herself an object of attraction to a large assemblage of fashionable people, and she tried to confine her thoughts and attention to an *andante* passage in the solo, which at the moment sounded like the agonized and passionate wail of a broken heart; but she became suddenly and embarrassingly confused by the discovery that a pair of eyes were playing like concentrated rays of burning light upon her face. She would fain not have looked at them, but she found her gaze irresistibly attracted, and then she became conscious that she was being regarded with an intense, resentful and angered scrutiny by one whose face she instantly recognized.

But, strangely, she recognized it only as though it had been that of a pictured saint, some beautiful ideal St. John, which she had worshipped in her childhood. She knew the face as an object of reverence and love, belonging to a far-off memory. She scanned the lineaments, wondering and trying to recall where and under what circumstances she had seen them before, and appeared to be quite unconscious of the varying shades of expression which were passing over them rapidly, like cloud-shadows across a field of snow, until they assumed a fierceness of wrath, hate and malignancy which created a sharp feeling of pain in her brain.

At the instant, too, she remembered that the face before her was that of the stranger on the pier at Gravesend, who had abruptly caught her by the wrist, and demanded of her, in such imperious tones, her name.

She saw that he had risen from his place by a young and beautiful lady, whose throat was literally blazing with diamonds, and looked as if he would advance to her to hurl upon her a torrent of violent invectives.

Wherefore, it was impossible for her to divine. His fiery glances had been as well bestowed on Cleveland Dysart, but mostly they were concentrated upon herself. For a moment she glanced right and left of her. Cleveland Dysart was on her right hand, standing erect like a soldier on parade; immediately on her left, but a little in her rear, stood the woman born Anne Marchmont.

It was clear, by the strange gentleman's looks, that he knew them all; but who was he?

She glanced at Cleveland Dysart, and saw his lips move, and she heard him say to her in a sharp, acrid, but deliberate tone—

"I see that your eyes have been caught by the face of him now glancing at you. Do you know it?"

"Only as a confused impression that it was once known to me," she answered, in an undertone, once more finding her gaze irresistibly drawn to the countenance which responded so resentfully to her inspection of it—so furiously, that under other circumstances she would have averted her looks, terrified and abashed.

"He is your father!" ejaculated Cleveland, with an emphasis which made the words ring like the clang of a bell in her brain.

If he had struck a dagger home to her heart he could not more effectually have paralyzed her. Sight, sense, motion, for the moment seemed to have left her.

The solo passage at the same moment ceased, dying away, as it were, in a quivering breath. The band of instruments followed on with a loud crash, then ensued some slight movement in the crowd of aristocratic personages, and Cleveland stepped a pace or two forward that he might still confront, and bait as it seemed, his irreconcilable enemy.

Before Etheline could recover from the shock she had received, and follow to regain her place at his side, she discovered suddenly a woman's pale face within an inch of her own—a face which she instantly recognized, for it was as though she was gazing at the reflection of herself in a dim mirror. To her intense surprise, this person caught her tightly by the wrist, and dragged her forcibly back several yards.

In thrilling accents, she whispered in her ear—

"You are in a bondage which will be fatal to you if you do not escape from it. Fly! I will cover your retreat, will occupy your position at *his* side, and prevent pursuit. Take this card, and proceed to the address written upon it. I will join you there—I, who have a nearer and a dearer claim to you than any living creature in the whole world. Fly! lose not a moment!"

An instant yet, and she saw the strange lady glide to the shoulder of Cleveland, and stand at his elbow. Then a throng passed before her, and she turned away. She was seized with a hysterical convulsion of the throat, a ringing confusion of sounds rushed into her brain and deafened her. She felt an agony of pain in her heart, and a quivering cry of utter woe rose to her lips, but without escaping.

"My mother!" she thought, wildly, and with a terrible cold shudder.

Then she pressed among the throng, agitatedly, to the door-way of the conservatory, into the corridor, across an open space among eddying people entering eagerly, out into the street, the broad way, at her swiftest pace—onward, onward!

Whither?

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 24.)

Sudden Change in the Color of Hair.

Two sudden changes of the color of hair from black to white are reported in a foreign medical magazine. It appears that a physician of Berlin, a strong, healthy and less than middle-aged man, sent his wife and one daughter to spend last summer at a watering-place. The day that he expected a letter informing him of their arrival, there came one saying that his daughter had been taken sick very suddenly, and was already dead. The shock was terrible, and instantly his hair became entirely gray. He had to visit some patients that same afternoon, and they scarcely recognized him. Their peculiar actions revealed the change to him. The other case was that of a man 35 years old, living in the Netherlands. He was one day passing the canal in Rotterdam, when he saw a child struggling in the water. He plunged in and brought it to land, but it was already dead by the time he had rescued its body. Bending over it to try to restore life, he discovered that the dead child was his own son. The blow, so sudden and unexpected, and coming upon him when he himself was so much exhausted, turned his hair entirely gray, and left him scarcely recognizable.

☞ An exhibition of shirt collars dating from the last century is announced in Paris, as also a collection of boots, shoes, and slippers, belonging to celebrated individuals since the reign of Louis XIV.

WHICH WAS IT?

BY DAISY BURNS.

"I don't care, I don't like him one bit. He thinks he knows more than ever Webster did."

"He knows considerably more than Bert Gaines."

"You needn't be holding up for him, he don't want you." Fannie Saunders's face flushed at this unkind remark.

"I know he don't want me, but I suppose I can speak well of him if he don't. I'm ashamed to hear you make such a rude speech, even to me."

This conversation was being carried on by the two sisters Fannie and Nellie Saunders one winter's day as they sat at work in their cheerful little bed-room. They were more like strangers than sisters, for they were very unlike both in appearance and character. Fannie was a dark-eyed girl with an intelligent face, while Nellie, the younger, was a pretty doll-faced girl with more vanity than intellect, and somewhat spoiled.

"A girl that can choose between Ethelbert Alexander and Herbert Gaines," continued Fannie, "and chooses the latter, must be crazy; do think the matter over, Nellie, before you give Mr. Gaines your final answer. I had so much rather see you the wife of Mr. Alexander, and we all see how much infatuated he is."

"I know he is in love with me," said Nellie; "but so is Bert Gaines."

"Pshaw," said Fannie.

"There it is," said Nellie. "You're always snubbing Bert. No, sister, you think if a man don't understand all those good-for-nothing 'ologies, and know as soon as he reads a verse of poetry who wrote it, he isn't worth a second thought—'intellectual people,' you call 'em."

"There you mistake me, Nellie. I know some men who are not at all intellectual, and whom I think a great deal of. No, it is not what one knows that makes the man, it is what he is. Laying aside Bert Gaines's lack of knowledge, what can you name in his favor? Nothing save his good looks; and what has that to do in a lifetime's decision? He has no principle, no business knowledge, not a single good quality, only a handsome face and a few thousand dollars; and what is that to a man of his wild nature? Now, Mr. Alexander—"

"Mr. Alexander is entirely too intellectual for me," said the spoiled beauty.

"No, Fannie," spoke up a hitherto silent brother, "Nellie don't like a man to know more than she does, and she knows Bert Gaines is her inferior. What do you think? Last evening some of us boys were quoting from Hamlet, and began to talk about Shakspeare's grandeur, when Mr. Bert remarked, 'I don't see what you all see in him to admire, he never wrote anything 'cept old dialogues.'"

Fannie laughed.

"I don't believe a word of it," said Nellie.

"And the other day," went on the young brother, "he wanted to know which I liked to read best, muslin-bound books, or yellow paper-back ones."

Nellie threw a book at him.

"I suppose," said Fannie, "you told him you judged a book by the contents, and not by the manner of binding."

"No, I told him I liked the yellow-back ones best, when they had pictures on 'em, and he said so did he." Bang went another book at his head. "Oh, what a charming brother I am to have;" and the boy went out whistling.

"There, Nellie, look," said Fannie, pointing down the walk. "There is Mr. Alexander; now do treat him well, and try and like him better;" she got up, smoothed Nellie's hair, put fresh ribbons on her, and sent her to receive Mr. Alexander, who was just ringing the door-bell; then she sat down by the fire again.

Fannie Saunders was just twenty-three years old, but owing to her having filled the housekeeper's place, as well as having been as a mother to the two younger children for years, she was quite matronly in feeling as well as appearance. There was nothing of the girl about her, yet her unselfish care of her sister and brother won for her much admiration. She was very proud of Nellie's beauty, and tried every way she could to push her sister forward and show her beauty to advantage; but at this time she was grieved to find Nellie about half-way in love with a worthless young man.

When Nellie left her she began building castles in the fire; she saw Nellie and Mr. Alexander in the embers walking about his stately house as man and wife. She saw him caress Nellie in the tender way she knew he would, and a sigh escaped her lips, and why? Ah! Fannie had had a little dream of her own when she had first met Ethelbert Alexander; but when the girls began to jest with Nellie about her new admirer, Fanny crept into the background and wondered how she could have been so silly.

"Sister," said Nellie, peeping in at the door, "Mr. Alexander has a new piece of music he wants you to play for him, and sister, he is so agreeable I think maybe I can like him best."

Fannie kissed the young face, saying, "that's a darling," and followed her into the parlor.

One day Fannie received a note from Mr. Alexander desiring a private interview. Fannie was overjoyed; yes, Nellie would soon be his wife now; for Nellie had concluded to say "yes" when that momentous question was asked her, and Fannie was glad she would escape from Bert Gaines. She agreed to meet Mr. Alexander, and now sat awaiting him. She had not long to wait, for soon he was ushered in by Nellie, who withdrew immediately with a blushing face to await the close of the interview. Already she saw herself presiding over his beautiful home, clad in her lovely silk, receiving his company and driving out daily behind those fine bays, and she was glad she was to marry him instead of Bert Gaines, for he could give her no fine house and silk dresses.

"Good evening, Miss Fannie," said Mr. Alexander, as he stepped in the room where Fannie sat awaiting him, "this is a pleasure I rarely enjoy, of seeing you alone; tell me, why do you shun me so much?" and he sat down on the sofa by her side.

"Shun you! why I am not conscious of having done so," she said, looking up at him.

"Well, you never let me see you, save in the presence of others, and at last I had to beg a private interview. Whenever I call, I always find Miss Nellie—but always have to insist, before I can see you."

"Well, I beg your pardon, and will promise not to do so any more; but is not this a lovely evening. I've read often of the beauty of the Italian skies, but surely they cannot be more lovely than our own just now. Are they? you have been there."

"Yes I have seen all that is lovely in Italy—and some time I may tell you of it. But now, I'd rather talk of something else; in fact of that which is nearest my heart. You know, I suppose, by this time, what my feelings are."

"Yes," said Fannie, and her heart fluttered.

"I thought I had shown plainly enough, what my intentions were; and now tell me—is there any hope for me—will my love come to and trust me?"

"Oh, yes—I'm sure"—but before she could finish, she was gathered to his breast and a bearded lip touched her forehead.

"What on earth do you mean, sir," she exclaimed, as an angry flush mantled her cheeks, and she tore herself from his embrace.

"Why, why, Miss Fannie, forgive me, I forgot myself. I was too happy for the moment, and forgot how rude I was. I began to think you cared nothing for me; and when you told me there was hope for me, and that you would trust me, I was overcome. Fannie, I have loved you for a long while, but you were so—"

"Loved me—loved me—me!" she exclaimed.

"Yes—who else did you suppose I loved?"

"Why, Nellie—I thought you loved Nellie, and I was so glad she would be your wife."

"Nellie, that pretty child. Why, how could you mistake me?"

"Every one thought you loved her."

"Then every one is mistaken. I love her dear, sweet, unselfish sister, and none but her; and now, Fannie, as you know who it is I really do love, can you answer my question as before? Is there any hope for me? Will my love come to and trust me?" She bowed her head on her hands. She had loved this man so long, and had buried it from herself, even when she thought he loved Nellie, and now her old sweet dream was to be realized. "Answer me, Miss Fannie. If you must say no, mine is a strong nature and can bear it. Perhaps it is too sudden for you. As you have misunderstood me so long, shall I give you time to learn to love me?"

"Ah! no," she replied, raising her eyes to his, which were so full of love. "That lesson I need not learn, for I love you now."

He grasped her hand and held it in his.

"I—I—loved you long ago," she continued, "but when I thought I saw you loved Nellie—I—I banished the bright dream and was glad it was so. Since then I have loved to think of it that Nellie would be your wife."

"No, Fannie, if I had wanted a pretty face I should have asked for your sister, but as I want a wife I'd much prefer you; and now, Fannie, as you love me, allow me to name an early day for you to become mine, and I will do all in my power to make you happy."

She consented, and an early day was named.

"But," she said, "I cannot see how in the world you came to love me instead of Nellie, when she is so beautiful and I so plain."

"Not plain in my eyes; no, to me you are the dearest woman on earth, and I could be happy with no other."

Nellie was very much shocked when she found she was not the one sought after all, but consoled herself with the thought that she loved Bert Gaines best anyway, if he wasn't as rich as Mr. Alexander; and Mrs. Bert Gaines she became at last, in spite of the remonstrances of Fannie and her brother-in-law.

(From the Popular Science Monthly.)

Don't Box the Children's Ears.

Children's ears ought never to be boxed. We have seen that the passage of the ear is closed by a thin membrane, especially adapted to be influenced by every impulse of the air, and with nothing but the air to support it internally. What, then, can be more likely to injure this membrane than a sudden and forcible compression of the air in front of it? If any one designed to break or overstretch the membrane, he could scarcely devise a more effective means than to bring the hand suddenly and forcibly down upon the passage of the ear, thus driving the air violently before it, with no possibility for its escape but by the membrane giving way. And far too often does it give way, especially if, from any previous disease, it has been weakened. Many children have been made deaf by boxes on the ear in this way. Nor is this the only way: if there is one thing which does the nerve of hearing more harm than almost any other, it is a sudden jar or shock. Children and grown persons alike may be entirely deafened by falls or heavy blows on the head. And boxing the ears produces a similar effect, though more slowly and in less degree. It tends to dull the sensibility of the nerve, even if it does not hurt the membrane. I knew a pitiful case once of a poor youth who died from a terrible disease of the ear. He had had a discharge from it since he was a child. Of course his hearing had been dull: and what had happened was that *his father had often boxed his ear for inattention!* Most likely that boxing on the ear, diseased as it was, had much to do with his dying. And this brings me to the second point. Children should never be blamed for being inattentive, until it has been found out whether they are not a little deaf. This is easily done by placing them at a few yards' distance, and trying whether they can understand what is said to them in a rather low tone of voice. Each ear should be tried, while the other is stopped by the finger. I do not say that children are never guilty of inattention, especially to that which they do not particularly wish to hear; but I do say that very many children are blamed and punished for inattention when they really do not hear. And there is nothing at once more cruel and more hurtful to the character of children than to be found fault with for what is really their misfortune. These things should be remembered here:—1. That slight degrees of deafness, often lasting only for a time, are very common among children, especially during or after colds. 2. That a slight deafness, which does not prevent a person from hearing when he is expecting to be spoken to, will make him very dull to what he is not expecting; and 3. That there is a kind of deafness in which a person can hear pretty well while listening, but is really very hard of hearing when not listening.

☞ The Courier-Journal it is that remarks: Some forty years ago, a parcel of fellows who were hunting stray cattle among the everglades of Florida came upon a party of Indians—the compatriots of Osceola—engaged in skinning some beeves. They fired into the party of Indians and killed five of them. That one volley of buck-shot cost the government $30,000,000.

☞ CLEANING SILVER.—Never put a particle of soap about your silver if you would have it retain its original lustre. When it wants polish, take a piece of soft leather and whiting and rub hard. The proprietor of one of the oldest silver establishments in the city of Philadelphia says that "housekeepers ruin their silver by washing it in soap suds, as it makes it look like pewter."

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ Crusty says that the list of marriages in the newspapers ought to be put under the head of "ring frauds."

☞ A Green Bay constable carried a warrant for a man over twenty-one years, but didn't catch him until the other day.

☞ An aged Detroit gentleman by the name of Levy exasperated at the Levyty of a pretty waitress in refusing to marry him, committed suicide by flinging himself from a car-platform, recently.

☞ "The mosquito is intensely religious," said Sparques to his spouse, today. "How so?" she inquired. "Because he is preying all the time," said Sparques. Mrs. Sparques smiled at her husband's joke, but immediately said, "Mosquitoes are not religious." "Why?" asked Sparques. "Because they present their bills on Sundays." Sparques went out for a walk and for meditation.

☞ A rural citizen being called on for a speech at a public gathering in Lawrence, a few evenings since, complied as follows: "Gentlemen and women, I ain't no speecher; more'n twenty years back I came here a poor idiot boy, and now what are I?"

☞ A girl in Macoupin County, Illinois, told her lover she would marry him if he could milk three cows clean while she was milking two. He failed, and at last accounts was practising on all the cows he could see, with the hope of getting another trial.

☞ A Portland man was caught fishing for trout on another man's land, the other day; the owner remonstrated, but retired in silence before the majestic answer, "Who wants to catch your trout? I'm only trying to drown this worm."

☞ An instance of throwing one's self about was witnessed at a party, in the case of a young lady, who, when asked to sing, first tossed her head, and then pitched her voice.

☞ The grasshoppers are slowly working their way northward from Texas. Many of them are so fat now that they can neither fly nor walk long at a time, and are compelled to take the cars at frequent intervals.

☞ One Folger, of Detroit, Michigan, has invented a flying machine which is successful in every particular, except that it falls to the ground too soon. His first experience with it, from the top of a barn, deprived him of consciousness for only fifteen minutes.

☞ Mr. Knapp, of Peekskill, won a four-dollar wager by turning a coffee-mill ten hours without stopping.

☞ A drunken fellow was put out of a saloon in Battle Creek, Michigan, on "circus day," and took his revenge by mounting a dry goods box, and delivering a temperance lecture to a large crowd.

☞ Irish ex-major—"So, me boy, you're going to India? Unhealthy place, you know. The last station I was at coffins were issued with annual clothing to the men, and kept as necessary supplies in store; and, bedad, I had a friend who was on a firing party over a man of his company in the morning, and who fired over himself in the evening, sir!"

☞ Athens (Georgia) Telegram: "Two or three school girls here are quite sick from swallowing heart'sease flowers. Their romance was that whenever they swallowed one of these flowers whole, and then expressed a wish, they would have it gratified. Prussic acid in the flowers made them quite sick. The romance was voted a humbug."

☞ A self-possessed young man called at a house in Atlanta, Georgia, a few mornings ago and asked to see his wife. "She is not here," replied the mistress of the house. "There is none here but the members of my own family." "Well," replied he, "it's one of them I want to see. I married your eldest daughter last night."

☞ A careless tank-keeper on the New York Central road neglected to shut off the water after an engine had been supplied, the other day, and a train of palace cars passed under the stream and were flooded, the water pouring down the ventilators in torrents, and ruining much costly clothing. The conductor told the saturated ones to make out their bills, however, and the company would pay for the damage.

☞ A young lady named Ella Wood was lately shot by her rejected lover, Henry Jewett, at Hudson, N. H. Jewett is 25 years of age. The young lady is a daughter of Mr. Charles Wood, of that place. Becoming desperate during an interview he pulled his six-shooter from his pocket and fired. The ball entered the forehead just above the eye. The wound may not be mortal. Jewett then assaulted the father, and finally committed suicide.

☞ Experience in India shows that an alligator is the most dangerous animal for a locomotive to encounter, as when struck they twist their tails between the spokes of the wheels and bring things to a standstill.

☞ A wedding at Lafayette was postponed for ten days because the bridegroom elect had a boil on his nose.

☞ An Arkansas obituary notice: "J. P.—of Helena, on Monday, the 3d inst., aged 14 years. His last words were, 'I didn't know it was loaded.'"

☞ During the Revolution of 1848 in Paris, a violent Red Republican, with long hair and greasy habiliments, while addressing the mob, gave expression to the following sentiments: "Citizens," he cried, "the political condition in which we are living is impossible for patriots like myself. It is not a Republic that we have got! It's a government!"

☞ The late Captain Hall wrote as follows to the editor of the Nautical Gazette, before embarking in the Polaris: "I shall bring you tidings which will astonish the world, and recompense my friends for all their labors in my behalf, or I will die in the attempt. I will never return to the Arctic regions again if I am successful; but if I am not, and live to see the United States, I shall tell my story, and then seek a home in the far north, where, in peace, I shall pass away to a brighter and better land. God bless you. Farewell."

☞ AT THE STREET CROSSING.—A nice young man stood at the corner of two streets. He had just had his boots polished to the highest degree of glossiness, and it was a serious question with him how to make the crossing without getting his boots soiled. A couple of fashionably-dressed ladies were approaching, and the mind of our young man was made up in an instant: he quietly waited until those ladies had swept up the mud with their trailing skirts, and then crossed in perfect safety.

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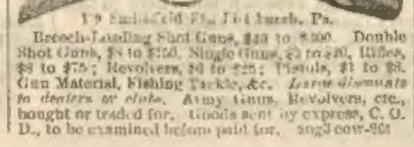

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OBSERVATIONS.

BY MAX ADELER.

[Editors will please bear in mind that the following Observations by Max Adeler, in common with the other original contents of THE POST, are copyrighted. We give this notice on account of the constant "appropriation" of Max Adeler's articles, without the requisite credit being given either to the writer or the paper.—*Ed. Sat. Eve. Post.*]

—With the exercise of a little prudence at this time of year health and life can be preserved without difficulty. Be careful while skating in July to have a man below to hold the ice up with a pole, and avoid snowballing entirely if you are apt to become overheated with exercise. Eat sparingly. A few pounds of cheese at a meal with a ham or two, a couple of mince pies, and three or four gallons of buttermilk, ought to be sufficient to stay your hunger, but no harm will be done if you carry in your vest-pocket three or four watermelons to be eaten at lunch. It is a good plan to jump right into the bath-tub every morning as soon as you get out of bed. Of course you needn't turn the water on unless you want to. That is a mere question of taste. Gentle exercise is the best. Lift the piano up and down stairs half a dozen times, or engage in a fight with a lightning-rod man; or jump off the roof a few times; or tie a bunch of flatirons to your heels and climb trees. Any of these pastimes is invigorating. Keep your temper calm and unruffled. If your mother-in-law throws the albata teapot at you, do not become excited. Sit and smile at her and heap coals of fire on her head; or if you have no fire, put the cat among her hair, or spill the gravy on her dress. Go to bed early and rise with the lark. We do not know when the lark rises; but it is safe to call it half past eight o'clock. If, however, you want to be accurate and desire to rise with something, how would it do to rise with the price of beef, or with the bread? Be careful not to run against any bullets if they come from a gun; and if you belong to a target company and go out shooting, stick as close as possible to the target. That is always the place of safety. And never eat gunwads right after dinner. Many a man who was in robust health and in the enjoyment of vigorous life, has been suddenly carried to the grave by thoughtlessly eating a couple of bushels of gunwads when his stomach was overloaded. We put forward these suggestions with confidence. They may not be any more valuable than those which constantly appear in the health journals, but they are at least quite as good.

—The cruel indifference of some governors to the sufferings of their unfortunate fellow-creatures is absolutely dreadful. There is a murderer in one of our county jails who was sentenced to be hung in August. He has petitioned Governor Hartranft to reprieve him for three or four months, because he has a bet on the October election, and he wants to see who wins. And yet the Governor has actually refused to let that man wait, and he will consequently go down to the grave uncheered by the thought that his adversary has swept in the stakes. Death is more than terrible when it comes in this form.

—Our clergymen are often very inconsistent. There was Rev. Dr. Byng, of Delaware. He preached a sermon the other day on the text, "A soft answer turneth away wrath." As he was going home from church a man asked him if he dyed his hair or wore a wig, and the doctor not only called him an impudent scoundrel, but caressed him with his alpaca umbrella. Strange that men should thus fail to put their precepts into practice.

—Slaymaker's next neighbor, Smiley, is an enthusiastic student of natural history. We had a menagerie in the town close by a few days ago, and Smiley happened to remark to Slaymaker, after the show had gone, that he saw that morning a lepus sylvaticus albus running across one of Staymaker's fields, and he thought it must have escaped from its cage. Slaymaker was horror-stricken. He rushed home, drove all the cattle into the barn, locked his children in the garret, barricaded his doors, loaded up his gun, told his wife that there was a raging hyena tearing and howling about the yard, and stood at the window to shoot the ferocious beast when it appeared. Slaymaker's place was in a fortified condition for two days, during which the garrison remained under cover. On the third day Smiley happened to drop in. Slaymaker asked him if he had seen any more of that hyena. Smiley asked what he meant. Slaymaker said he meant that lepus sylvaticus beast alluded to by Smiley. Then Smiley called him an old fool, and said the animal referred to was only a white rabbit. We will not undertake to say how mad Slaymaker was. We want to try to seem truthful, and if we should explain that Slaymaker had a pressure of about six hundred pounds of red-hot rage to the square inch, we might be suspected of exaggeration. He don't speak to Smiley now.

—A correspondent says: "I have a friend who will not believe me when I assert that Alexander cut the Gordian knot. He says it was Leonidas. How shall I convince him that he is wrong?" We would decidedly advise mild and conciliating measures with this person. It is vitally important that he should believe in Alexander, but we deprecate violence. Approach him in a friendly spirit, let him see that you are seeking to promote his own good. Lead him to some quiet spot where you can commune with him alone, and then, when he is seated, suddenly sit down on him and seize his nose between your teeth and fumble among his hair with your hands, and shake him until he sees that he is wrong. If he still clings to his frightful error about Leonidas, you might reason with his shins with the toe of your boot, or carry conviction to his soul by stamping on his corns. We have known men who have been taught to see the truth by having a hole bored through them with a carving knife, but this gives the coroner so much trouble and makes such a muss on the carpet that we do not advise it. If you have good teeth you ought to be able to arrange things in Alexander's behalf by steady pressure upon the unbeliever's nose. If he won't yield, his nose will, if you bite hard enough.

—Thompson and Simms live opposite each other in a narrow street up-town. They were going on a fishing excursion the other day, and as they wanted to be sure to wake in time to catch the early train they ran a bit of clothes-line across the street, into the second-story windows, and each tied an end to his leg, so that if one awoke the other would immediately feel a pull. The scheme was an excellent one, and we know of no reason why, under ordinary circumstances, it should not have worked well. But about five o'clock that morning, some laborers stopped in front of the house next door above Simms's, for the purpose of erecting a telegraph pole. When the hole was dug, they began to put the pole up on end. But unfortunately it slipped, and came down with tremendous force upon the clothes-line. Mrs. Simms was very much surprised to see Henry suddenly go over the foot of the bed and shoot feet foremost out of the window; but even she was not more amazed than Mrs. Thompson was when Archibald performed the same feat. They met in the middle of the street, clustering, as it were, around that pole, both with a leg broken. They wake themselves now with alarm clocks. It is safer, and less exciting.

—A boy in one of the soldiers orphans' schools writes to his mother in Lancaster to complain of ill-treatment. He says they force him to eat strawberries three times a day. How long—oh, how long are these inhuman and diabolical outrages against the defenceless poor to continue without punishment? The despairing cries of these friendless orphans, ground down beneath the iron heel of remorseless tyranny, appeal to Heaven for vengeance upon the monsters who wear heels of that kind. Would the fathers of these innocent ones have gone to battle with our foes if they could have foreseen that an ungrateful nation would stuff their guileless infants with strawberries? Never! They would have said, "we love our country, we cling to the old flag and wish to fight for it, but better disunion, anarchy and ruin than strawberry diet for William Henry and Mary Jane." Cannot something be done for these little sufferers? Our hearts bleed for them as we think of them sitting in that school, full of misery and anguish and strawberries and passionate regrets, and ginger bread and algebra and grief, writing home to their mothers of their sorrows.

—Mr. Birkenbine of Norristown came home from market the other day with a large snapping-turtle, which he dropped in the rain-water cask for safe-keeping. Little Henry Birkenbine while playing that afternoon threw his ball in the cask and climbed up the side to get it. He saw the snapping-turtle and leaned over further in order to get a better view. He had no idea up to that moment with what earnestness and sociability a snapping-turtle takes hold. But when he dropped off the cask with the animal embracing his nose, he realized how sincere in their attachments such reptiles can be. They pried the turtle's jaws open with a red-hot poker, but even then the end of young Mr. Birkenbine's nose was scorched until it was as red as a July sunset, while an extra hole was bitten through the bridge. His investigations into the idiosyncracies of turtles satisfied him. He will explore other departments of science in the future.

—It was while we were editing a paper up in Snyder county. A young man named Edward Jones, living in the place, was married. Our reporter prepared a long notice of the wedding, and as old Jones was a good advertiser, we called attention to the report in the following editorial:

"In the first column of our third page to-day will be found an account of a very interesting ceremony in which our young friend Edward Jones was the chief actor. We know of no one who better deserves to have the noose slipped over his head, or whom we would more willingly spare so that he might share such a fate. The happy tears which were shed yesterday as he went off, showed that the joy of his friends was not unmingled with sorrow, but we need hardly say that Mr. Jones himself had that contentment which comes from positive assurance of entrance upon a happier life."

That night while the foreman was making up the forms, he received an account of the execution of a man named Jones for murder. So he lifted out the report of the wedding and put the story of the hanging in the first column of the third page, and then forgot to put the story of the marriage in again. The next morning, early, as we came down the street we observed old Jones (the liberal advertiser) sitting on the curb-stone with a shot-gun in his hand. On the front steps stood another Jones with a bull dog and a club. And there were various members of the Jones family scattered around the neighborhood armed with various kinds of artillery, and all looking as if they would never be perfectly happy until they shed somebody's blood. Then we suddenly decided to take the early train for Harrisburg and to enjoy a short vacation. When the Jones family was calmer we came back, and that very afternoon the foreman was carried to the hospital a bleeding wreck.

—We perceive in the papers that an Atlanta doctor advises persons who wish to avoid the cholera "to stand on their heads for a considerable time each day, for the purpose of causing abdominal depression." It will be an affecting spectacle for a man to come home in the evening and see his wife and children and his aunt all standing on their heads in a row in the entry waiting for abdominal depression. We cannot conscientiously recommend the prescription, but it is much better than that offered by a Bethlehem doctor, who advised persons to get some one to sit upon their stomachs for a few moments each day. Ridgely was struck with the idea, and he asked his next door neighbor, McGann, to assist him. McGann weighs over two hundred pounds, and when he stooped to sit on Ridgely, he came down as it were with a "squash," which knocked the breath out of Ridgely and made him totally insensible. But McGann was not aware of the fact, so he took a paper from his pocket and began to read. He gradually became so much interested that he forgot himself completely; and he studied up the convulsions in France, and devoured the editorials on Gen. Butler, and guessed the conundrums, and chuckled over the Indian massacres, and informed himself about the prices of marketing, and cried over the bad grammar in the locals, and tried to parse the marine intelligence, and poisoned his mind with the certificates of patent medicine cures. He was thus absorbed for four hours, and then he happened to think of Ridgely. Ridgely was beginning to look blue about the mouth, and he was only brought to by soaking him for a day or two in brandy and hartshorne. And now he is not only conscientiously opposed to compression of the stomach as a cholera preventive, but he is praying that the cholera will break out in the McGann family and rattle the entire concern into the silent grave. McGann has left town for the summer, because he knows Ridgely's shot-gun never will scatter.

☞ TOO MUCH DUE.—"Oh, that this too, too solid flesh would melt," sighed Jones, the other morning, as he wrestled with his beefsteak, "thaw, and resolve itself into a dew." "And so it might, Mr. Jones," snapped Mrs Cloggers, "if there was not so much due from some of my boarders whom I might name." Jones did not reply, but continued to ruminate upon the stale, flat and unprofitable uses of this world.

☞ An experienced underwriter believes that oiled rags occasion more fires in this country than any other single cause.

☞ Cuba, N. Y., has a horse fancier 106 years old who rides a high-spirited black horse that he has broken to saddle within the past two or three years.

"'O, come into my parlor,'
Said the Spider to the Fly."

YOUNG HUSBAND.—"Yes, but twenty dollars, hang it! Why, the bonnets in the window are ticketed only five!"

MADAME AMARANTHE.—"Yes, my dear gentleman; but, *candidly, would* a cheap article be suitable to such a singularly beautiful person as your dear lady!"

[MORAL—Husbands, don't accompany your wives on such expeditions as this.

The Man in the Linen Duster.

BY SPHINX.

"'Sincerity is the way of Heaven. To think how to be sincere is the way of man.' Yes! to think how to *be* sincere—that's as far as I can get at present," concluded Kenneth Harvey, closing the book in his hand as his friend Jack Cone entered the office.

"Hello! old Encyclopedia! what's up?" said the latter, revolving around in the office-chair—and picking up the book just laid aside. "Metaphysics? Confucius! Mencius! and the thermometer at ninety degrees in the shade? You are an ice-cooler for me, ain't you? Wake up, old boy!"

"Here, Cone—drain this pitcher—seize these fans less frantically, for 'there is an ill wind that blows nobody good.'"

"Come, old Duster, entertain me, do? I'm going out in the four train to Riverton, and have a half-hour on my hands!"

"Jack," said Harvey, with a degree of seriousness that brought the other's face to a twenty-six-inch length, "you feel that I have never deceived you in any way, don't you?"

"Oh, to thunder with your conundrums! what an old parson you're getting to be—you'll be asking me next: 'What is the chief end of man?' and I should answer: 'To explore, at this rate.'"

"Well, you had better listen while I can deliver my sermons extempore, they'll be shorter—besides I'm going away."

"Going away!" exclaimed Jack Cone, bringing the elevated two legs of his chair to the original position of four.

"Yes, Jack, I've thought over all our friendship involves, and have come to the conclusion that I am anything but a friend to you if I remain."

"Christopher Columbus! have you picked my pockets or blasted my reputation?"

"Neither the one or the other, but I have fallen in love with the lady I m naturally to suppose is your choice, or will be—and, Cone, old fellow—I'm off for awhile—say two or three months!"

Jack's honest face changed to a conscious flush, but he grasped his friend's hand warmly, and said: "Harvey—I wish my luck was yours—pon honor! If I didn't think she loved me to distraction, I'd go to Cayenne or the mischief myself! Come, old chap, don't look so solemcholy; you've done no wrong as far as I'm concerned. Your time will come some day! cheer up, my hearty!" and the door had closed on honest Jack Cone, who could not stand there surveying a man whose unhappiness was occasioned by his own good fortune.

The next day he dropped in at Harvey's office, but found him gone, with a note left for his friend. Jack tore it open and read:

"DEAR JACK—I do not think it worth while to say where I am going—but one thing, my dear fellow, I have never given Miss Jerome a single cause of regret or annoyance. Yours faithfully, K. H."

Jack Cone's face at that minute was a study. With his hat tipped back, and ludicrous surprise and amusement struggling in his face, he exclaimed, "Pshaw! Christine Jerome! am much obliged to you, Mr. 'K. H.,' but I prefer her cousin. So Christine's forwarding of Millie's letters has done the mischief. Soape," said he to the office boy (to whom he had given the appellation on account of the urchin's expenditures in that line), "Soape, where the dickens has your master gone? Speak up! and stop that everlasting chewing!"

"Well, yer see, sur, I was cleanin' out them 'ere desk drawers this morning, an' Mr. Harvey comes in—says he: 'Bob, my linen duster—quick! hurry yourself!' Well, sir, I pitched a little quicker than ever you see, for I upset a pitcher o' water doing it!"

"Hm! well, where do you think he has gone?"

"It's my opinion, sur, he jist out for Delaware."

"Why so?"

"Well, he told old Muggins to direct letters to Dover, and that I'll bet is the capital of Delaware, if Mitchell's Geography ain't gone back on me!"

"Dover," mused Jack, going slowly out of the office. "Well, I'll just go up to Riverton, I guess, and will say nothing of it to Christine."

It was about six in the evening when Mr. Cone wended his way up the rose-path of "Jerome Terrace." His aunt awaited him in the vestibule.

"Jack, Millie's come!"

"*What!*"

"Yes—Christine left home this morning; and went, too, without her aunt's address. The trunks were packed off early, and I found a card on her dressing-table, after she had left."

"But where has she gone?"

"To Wilmington. Aunt Bessie wanted her for a fortnight, I believe. Why she was so anxious to go, I can't imagine."

"I guess she's in pursuit of a linen duster!" he returned with a grin.

"What?"

"Oh, nothing, aunt,—ah, there is Millie now!" and he flew over the terrace to meet her.

About the time Jack and his lady love were strolling under the trees, Miss Jerome was seated on the deck of one of the steamers plying between Philadelphia and Wilmington, and feasting her eyes upon the panoramic visions of June loveliness. To say that her state of mind was tranquil, is not to express the cool comfort of her linen suit, or the artistic bend of her Swiss hat, with its floating violet ribbons. Her sun umbrella benevolently shielded her, at the same time affording her a fair and beauteous prospect. On the other side of the boat, a solitary figure leaned over the railing, looking into the water with all apparent intention to ignore the beauties of nature in any shape, whether gliding sunlit banks and handsome villas, or ladies with hazel eyes and regular features. Miss Jerome viewed this man impatiently for some time. "How any man can resist earth, sky, and—and everything, for some cool speculation that cannot be diverted from the paddle-wheel—I can't imagine." Then her thoughts would wander off again to the golden-tinted banks and shadowed water. Soon she was aroused from her revery by a voice saying:

"Missis, kin you tell me how fur we are from de city of Wilmington? 'case I'se in a hurry—I is!"

A humorous smile just tinged her lips as she looked up into the face of a stalwart negro, replying—

"No, I can't tell you; but maybe that gentleman, the man in the linen duster, *can*."

The person so designated bit his lips to keep from laughing, as he thought of the innumerable diagrams into which it was wrinkled. The negro crossed the deck and asked the same question, and was duly answered, Christine supposed, for he turned away with a satisfied grin.

The wearer of the crumpled coat turned and saw a calm face, whose profile was perfectly familiar. He started forward, then retreated. But she glancing quietly around and recognizing him, said very distinctly—

"Good-afternoon, Mr. Harvey!"

He raised his hat somewhat formally, and was the picture of embarrassment. Christine Jerome possessed a rare facility for equanimity, and to a stranger her face would have implied a degree of the quality perhaps too largely developed for what is termed "attractiveness" in women. It was the result of being healthfully capable of diversion from whatever she felt would overtax her mind or body; thus receiving a contentment that most people would have termed indifference. There were few men who interested her more than Kenneth Harvey—and if she had probed her inmost thought, no one who could so readily gain her sincere attention. Christine Jerome was not a susceptible girl—she could, with unruffled composure, meet the varieties of attention of which all women are the recipients. As Harvey was hesitatingly crossing the deck her thought was—"He is evidently disturbed with having to talk to me!" She was, however, possessed of too much tact, not to make the best of the unexpected meeting.

"When I directed the man to you, I little thought I should so soon after meet an old acquaintance," she said pleasantly as he sat down beside her.

"So I had supposed."

"Do you know I am just enchanted with this river trip? It seems funny that I have never been to Wilmington before, don't it?" she queried, her appreciative eyes gazing delightedly on all sides.

"Yes, it *is* rather remarkable, having lived in Philadelphia for so long a time," he replied, with what seemed to her a disinterested sigh.

There was then one of those brief silences that are unpremeditated. Her delicate musing face wore a rather abstracted expression, and a sense of dissatisfaction came over Harvey as he saw her *en rapport* with the scenery and the golden witchery of the day. Her countenance had lost the statue-like repose that very regular features usually convey. There was a fine kindling of pleasurable emotions and contemplative isolation about her half-averted face that seemed altogether irrespective of Jack Cone or himself. "What if she doesn't return his love?" he thought, and the thought brought a sudden determination to find out. "Perhaps that is the reason she is leaving home," he cogitated, and a quickly renewed hope made him draw his chair forward with a degree of resolution that quite surprised her. She met his very handsome eyes in a carelessly interrogative manner, which changed to a consciousness that this man had a purpose suddenly connected with herself.

"Your saying something about Wilmington, Miss Jerome, naturally led me to suppose you might be going there?"

"Ah! and your silence respecting your destination led *me* to suppose you were going there also—is it so?"

"I don't know—that is—I shouldn't wonder!"

"There is some pleasure in such an answer," she rejoined, mischievously. "You are compelled to have no settled plans, but may drift down this river and land at any place along the shore before or after nightfall."

"There you are mistaken. I *had* settled plans—this was to have been no pleasure trip, but one of—of—oh, nonsense! I beg your pardon, Miss Jerome, but did you not leave your cousin at the Terrace?"

"Jack? Oh! no. Did he speak of coming up?"

"He started for Riverton yesterday afternoon," and Harvey almost groaned as he wondered if his own confession had prevented Jack from going. Now matters were even worse; here was Miss Jerome and himself quietly sailing farther and farther away from Philadelphia, and the man who loved her perhaps thinking it was a previously concerted plan. Kenneth felt almost inclined to quarrel with her then and there.

"Was Jack aware of your departure, Miss Jerome?"

"Oh, no. Why should he be?"

"Why, indeed!" thought Kenneth, crushing the hope that was beginning to stir restlessly within him. "Poor Jack!" he thought, with genuine remorse.

"Why, you are as solemn as an owl, Mr. Harvey. I guess he will survive my absence—he has two billet-doux to console him."

"Yes," thought her companion, "and if she could see his reception of them, she would not dole them out like so many sugar plums to a child—you don't mean to say you did not tell him you were going?"

"I do, indeed." He looked at her reprovingly, but she burst out laughing in his face. "Since when have you become my Mentor?" she inquired, defiantly.

"I beg pardon, I was just thinking of his wretchedness."

"Mr. Harvey, what *do* you mean?"

"I simply mean that he was counting so joyfully upon going to Riverton yesterday. I don't know when I've seen him so jubilant," he replied, annoyed at having so far committed himself. To his further embarrassment she laughed with most musical abandon; pausing, then breaking out afresh in little subdued peals of mirth. He bit his lips with vexation.

"Don't look so tried! I see I must let you into a little secret. My cousin has not seen his lady-love for one year; as she is under the surveillance of a very crabbed uncle, she has been sending her letters via Jerome Terrace. I wanted to go to Wilmington, and invited Millie Crittenden to keep mamma company and please Jack, though I said nothing of it to him, intending it as a pleasant surprise. So I don't think he will be so utterly disconsolate—do you?"

He was gazing guardedly at some hay-barges near the shore, afraid to turn lest she should see the change in his mood. She waited for an answer for some time, then a little mortified smile flickered across her face, and she looked down into the dimpled water. Kenneth Harvey slowly raised his hat, and passed his hand over his forehead. He felt that his eyes were full of exultant love, and he let the lids droop cautiously over them; his mouth was quivering with suppressed feeling.

"What a very handsome man, mamma! look at him! Not *that* one—the man in the linen duster!" came in audible lisping accents from a foolish-looking miss, who, with a party, had just come up on deck. Miss Jerome looked quickly up at him, feeling sure he must have heard the remark. He was looking, she thought, as if he enjoyed it too!

"This unfortunate coat is my bane to-day!" he observed laughingly.

"Oh, if it serves to designate you as a handsome man, you needn't object to it!"

"True!" he rejoined with apparent satisfaction.

"He is a very 'vanity of vanities'" she thought within the depths of her amusement at this new phase in his character. "I believe the remark has restored your good humor," she ventured, with a slightly sarcastic intonation.

"I believe it has," he vouchsafed, looking over her head at the young girl opposite. Christine turned her face rather petulantly in another direction.

"It has displeased you, or rather I have?"

"Not at all, the remark was perfectly true," she replied, with a shade of contempt curling her under lip.

"When will you return to Riverton?" he asked, abruptly vexed with his own nonsense.

"I don't know. I wish I hadn't started! I believe I came away more to serve as an excuse for Millie's arrival than anything else."

"I had an equally generous excuse," he said, moodily. "I enjoyed it at first; it was so sunny and charming; but now everything is getting very gray and—"

"Yes, we older children are still more pleased with the glamour cast over everything, than the things themselves."

"What do you mean, that we are idealists?"

"Not exactly—but that we invest persons and things with impressions as evanescent as the afternoon sunlight."

"Oh, I do not love the power of the objects themselves, only they seem like people who have changed in their mood toward us," she answered considerately, "I see you are very responsive to nature's changes, are you that way in the same degree toward human nature?"

"I am—that is, I used to be, too deeply affected by the changes in a face; but since then have known that they conceal thought rather than express it."

"That is not the popular supposition."

"Oh, I judge others by myself. Is it not true that when we are most glad, we are afraid to evince it, and thus express in the face a look of cautious restraint; and when we are deeply wounded it is pride and not the real grief that comes to the surface."

He smiled as he thought how unintentionally she was photographing *herself;* but he did not enlarge upon the subject further than to say, "so by the expression of your face I am not to judge whether you were glad or sorry to meet me this afternoon?" She was so completely surprised out of her habitual reserve as to make no effort at response; but endeavored to conceal the rush of color flickering over her face. He saw he had startled her too soon, and therefore added by way of establishing her usual calm, "or rather I should have taken it for granted that there was neither gladness nor regret to express?" Her confusion increased, and her absolute silence broke up his cool manner. He leaned forward with the most urgent entreaty in his eyes, and a husky expression in his voice.

"Is it wrong, or too soon to ask if you felt either the one or the other?"

"Neither at the time."

"And *now?*" he questioned, his eyes full of beseeching earnestness.

"*Now* I cannot quite tell!" she said indistinctly.

"Will you not try to tell me?"

"I think you *know*," she said, with burning cheeks and averted eyes.

"Yes. I think I *do*, thank God!" he said, with a deep sigh.

The bell of the boat began to ring as they neared the shore, in the dusky twilight. But presently Miss Jerome, who had nervously tossed the things about in her satchel, exclaimed:

"I have come away without Aunt Bessie's address!"

"There *are* such uncomfortable things as directories; but let us go home in this very boat?"

"But what will they all say?"

"We cannot tell till we get there!" he replied, with a comical glance at her downcast eyes. It was very unsentimental, I must acknowledge, but she leaned over the railing and shook with merriment. It didn't hurt Mr. Harvey's feelings a particle, and after the people had crossed the plank, and the last cart had rolled off, these two strolled into the cabin and sat down.

"As no telegram was sent to Aunt Bessie, she could not have expected me to-day," ventured Christine, shyly. Then they laughed and laughed, these two truants! At last they went out upon the front deck and sat in the starlight, though beneath their glitter was—

"The mysterious light which doth reveal, and yet
transform; which gives
Destiny, sorrow, youth and death and life,
Intensest meaning; in disquieting
Lifts up; a shining light; men call it love."

About ten o'clock the good people at the Terrace were startled by a carriage driving up. Jack Cone rushed out with a lantern, and beheld Christine alighting.

"Bless my heart, dear cousin, have you returned with Aunt Bessie? By jingo! if it isn't the man in a linen duster! Oh, Cupid! he of course got lost in Dover, and returned in clover to Brotherly Love. Come to my arms, Harvey, my boy! You confounded sell! Your blessing, aunt; and coffee and biscuits for two!" he added, as Harvey placed Christine's hand in that of her mother's, and replied, significantly:

"Say for *four*, Jack?" looking at Millie, who joined them, with the wondering inquiry:

"What does it all mean—anyhow?"

Answers to Correspondents.

PAY YOUR POSTAGE.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces payment of the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

We cannot undertake to answer questions relating to the acceptance or rejection of manuscripts in this column.

ENQUIRER, (New Jersey,) asks: "What is the *proper* way of spelling a word that is *pronounced* meer-shaum? It is an article out of which those beautiful and costly tobacco pipes and cigar-holders are manufactured. 2d. What do you think of my writing?" 1st. Meer-schaum. It is pronounced meer-shawm. 2d. Your writing is fair.

SUNSCRIBER, (Philada.,) writes: "A friend of mine, a mechanic, has lately patented a velocipede which I am convinced is a first-rate invention, but being ignorant on the subject he does not know the best way to dispose of his patent. Any information that you can give on the subject will greatly oblige." We do not know any readier means than to advertise his patent-right for sale. By this means he will be likely to cause men interested in the matter to examine his invention, and may possibly effect a sale.

W. A. McC., (Williamsport, Pa.,) asks: "1st. Do you think the Caspian Sea has one or more than one subterranean outlet? 2d. Ought Africa to be considered an island, now that the Suez canal has made it completely surrounded by water? 3d. Why is it that the front wheels of wagons, buggies, &c., are smaller than the hind ones? 4th. Were the Modocs ever a great tribe? 5th. Is there any way to remove freckles from the face? 6th. What is the usual cost per acre of a farm west of the Mississippi river? 7th. What is the full name of the present mayor of New Orleans? 8th. What are knots, and how do they get into wood?" 1st. No. It is believed to have no outlet, but to lose by evaporation the water it receives from rivers. 2d. No. Europe and Asia combined might just as well be called an island. We speak of the continent of Africa, and the continents of Europe and Asia; and the cutting of a canal through the isthmus makes neither of these the less a continent. Both the eastern and western continental masses are entirely surrounded by water. It is their size, more than their condition in this respect, that entitles them to be called continents. Australia, for the same reason might justly aspire to continental dignity. 3d. This is done for convenience in turning. The carriage could not be easily turned were the front wheels of large diameter. 4. No. They are a subtribe of some of the Western families of the Indian race, and have never, probably, been of any importance in respect to numbers. 5th. We have several times given directions in this column for the removal of freckles. We will repeat one of these recipes.—Grate horse-radish very fine, steep it for several hours in buttermilk, strain, and use the liquid as a wash, night and morning. 6th. The price varies so much with the state, and the character and situation of the land, that no average could be made that would convey any useful knowledge. Much good government land is yet to be had under the Homestead law, for settlement and improvement. Other lands may be had from ten dollars an acre upward to a considerable figure, according to location and character of soil. 7th. We do not know. 8th. Every branch of a tree extends inward as well as outward, and the knots are simply the extension of the round branch inward through the wood toward the centre of the tree.

A. B., (Oak Grove,) says: "I have a question or two to ask, which if you will answer, I will be very much obliged to you. Tell me, is there a work called Ossian? If so, what is the price? What do you give caged mocking-birds to eat in winter?" There is such a work. There are various editions at different prices. You had better address some book publisher for full information. We have heard recommended for mocking-birds, boiled eggs chopped fine and mixed with Indian meal. We know of one gentleman who gave his birds every morning fresh meat cut into thin strips of the size and shape of a worm. He considered it very beneficial.

BOATSWAIN, (Philadelphia,) asks: "Will you please answer the following questions in your correspondents' column in the Post? 1st. If, while rowing, the boat you were in was gaining on a boat going in the same direction as your own, and you wished them to give you room to pass, while going through the arch of a bridge what language would be proper to use if you wished them to move a little to the right of their course? What if you wished them to move to the left? 2d. Can you give me the signals with the boatswain's whistle for calling the boat's crew to man the boat, &c., &c.? 3d. Can you recommend a book on rowing giving the above information? 4th. What is your opinion concerning my penmanship?" 1st. In nautical nomenclature the left side is port, the right side starboard. If you wish the boat to shift to either side you could use the proper one of the above terms. It would be correct to call out "hard on your port," if you wish the boat to shift to the right, for this would be done by bearing on the oars of the left side. "Hard on your starboard" to shift to the left. 2d. There are about twenty or thirty different boatswain's calls. To man the boat is a long, serial whistle, to pipe hammocks three short whistles, &c. Many boatswains simply call attention by the whistle, and then call out their orders by word of mouth. 3d. We do not know any work giving all these points. There is a work called "The Boat and how to manage it," which may answer your purpose. 4th. You write a good hand.

INQUISITIVE JIMMY, (Dalton, Ga.,) asks: "Do you tell how a printing press can be invented to print both sides of a newspaper at one impression? 2d. Do you think I would make a book-keeper? 3d. Do you think I will ever write any better than I do now, and what do you think of my penmanship?" A press constructed on the plan of the late Mr. Bullock of this city prints both sides at once, and will probably ultimately come into general use for daily papers of large circulation. The London Times has a press invented by Mr. Walters which does the same thing. As for your writing it will have to be much better than it is now before you will make a book-keeper.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]